NATION

Wankhede vs Aryan: Red Chillies, Netflix summoned by Delhi HC

≫ Page: 4 ≪

BUSINESS

1GB wireless data cheaper than cup of tea, says PM

≫ Page: 7 ≪

SPORTS

Ind vs WI 2nd Test: Good batting strip on cards

≫ Page: 8 ≪

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SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

ساڈھ روزنامہ بنگلور

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50% of GBA's corporators will be women, says DKS

BENGALURU, 8 OCT

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said that 50 per cent of the tickets in the elections for the five corporations of the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) would be given to women. Participating in an interaction at Mount Carmel College, he said, "Half the corporators in all the five corporations under the GBA will be women." Asked about criticism about the conditions of City's roads, he said, "Is there any other city in India which allows citizens to identify and report potholes? People will remember (me in) 10-15 years." Asked about opposition to the tunnel road, he said, "what is the alternative for (it)?" ***—Salar News***

WHO seeks India's response on cough syrup deaths

BENGALURU, 8 OCT

AThe World Health Organisation (WHO) has asked India whether the cough syrup linked to over 15 child deaths in the country has been exported to other countries, a senior official of the global health agency said on Wednesday. The deaths were all linked to the Coldrif medicine, banned after a test confirmed the presence of the chemical on 2 October. The WHO said it will assess the need for a Global Medical Products Alert on Coldrif syrup once it receives official confirmation from Indian authorities. Over 140 children in the Gambia, Uzbekistan and Cameroon have died since 2023 also linked to syrups made in India. ***—PTI***

Deve Gowda shifted from ICU to ward

BENGALURU, 8 OCT

Former prime minister HD Deve Gowda who is hospitalised with an infection, has been shifted to the ward, the hospital treating him said on Wednesday. The 92-year-old JD(S) patriarch is currently managed medically, and his progress is being monitored by a team of medical experts, it said. "Deve Gowda was admitted to Manipal Hospital at Old Airport Road with an infection yesterday. He is currently managed medically and is shifted to the ward," the hospital said in a statement. He was earlier being treated in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). Though the hospital has not specified the infection, sources said that he had developed urinary tract infection. ***—PTI***

2 soldiers missing after combing operations in J&K

SRINAGAR, 8 OCT

Security forces launched a massive search operation in the forests of Kokernag area in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag after losing contact with two soldiers during a combing exercise, officials said on Wednesday. The combing operation was launched two days ago in the Ahlan Gadole area of Kokernag as following inputs that a group to terrorists was hiding there, they said. However, two soldiers, who are part of the elite para unit, went missing as their communication line went out, officials said, adding that helicopters were pressed into aerial reconnaissance to locate them. Officials say the area is a hotspot of terrorism. ***—PTI***

Starmer bats for trade with India

Modi welcomes UK PM's 'historic' visit

UK PM Keir Starmer with a delegation of 125 of business leaders and university vice chancellors at the Taj Mahal Hotel in Mumbai ***PHOTO: PTI***

MUMBAI, 8 OCT

The opportunities waiting to be seized under the India-UK free trade agreement are "unparalleled", British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said on Wednesday as he kick-started his first visit to India after assuming charge.

The British leader, accompanied by a delegation of 125 of the UK's most prominent business leaders, entrepreneurs and university vice chancellors, landed in Mumbai on Wednesday on a two-day visit.

Starmer and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will hold talks on Thursday to explore ways to expand bilateral ties.

"We signed a major trade deal with India in July -- the best secured by any country -- but the story doesn't stop there," Starmer said. "It's not just a piece of paper, it's a launchpad for growth. With India set to be the third biggest economy in the world by 2028, and trade with them about to become quicker and cheaper, the opportunities waiting to be seized are unparalleled."

His visit to India comes two-and-half months after the two countries inked the landmark free trade pact that will increase market access, cut tariffs and double bilateral trade by 2030.

Modi welcomed Starmer on X: "Welcome Starmer on your historic first visit to India with the largest ever trade delegation from the UK. Looking forward to our meeting tomorrow for advancing our shared vision of a stronger, mutually prosperous future."

Top executives of companies such as Rolls Royce, British Telecom, Diageo, London Stock Exchange and British Airways are part of Starmer's delegation. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

TALKING POINTS

- No hike in UK visas for Indians: Starmer.
- Yash Raj Films will shoot 3 movies in the UK in 2026, creating 3,000 jobs in the UK.
- India and UK are exploring a 1B Pound/ year deal over Scotch Whiskey.
- Rolls Royce has 'deep ambitions' in India, says its CEO. India is looking to finalise a jet engine programme with the UK. Rolls-Royce is expected to join hands with an Indian entity for it.

NDA, INDIA hold talks to resolve Bihar seat-sharing

Congress leaders meet for Bihar polls at New Delhi; BJP leaders, including Bihar DyCM Samrat Choudhary & state BJP President Dilip Jaiswal, meet in Patna, on Wednesday ***PHOTOS: PTI***

PATNA/BENGALURU/ DELHI, 8 OCT

The ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and the Opposition INDIA bloc on Wednesday held hectic parleys to iron out the differences over seat-sharing with their respective allies, who are jostling for more seats in the next month's high-stakes Bihar polls.

While the BJP's Election Committee meeting to discuss seat-sharing arrangements among NDA constituents was held in Patna, the Congress brass met in Delhi to discuss party candidates and is learnt to have finalised 25 of its candidates.

Union Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi requested that the NDA provided his Hindustani Awam Morcha (HAM) at least 15 seats.

According to sources in NDA, the bigger allies JD(U) and BJP are likely to contest 102 and 101 seats, respectively.

A final decision will be taken by the party's Central leadership in Delhi, sources said.

> **Nitish Kumar is NDA's face for the Chief Ministerial post in the coming assembly polls. (But) the Congress has made it clear that Tejashwi Yadav will be the Chief Ministerial face of RJD, not of the Mahagathbandhan (alliance)**
>
> -Giriraj Sing, BJP Union Minister

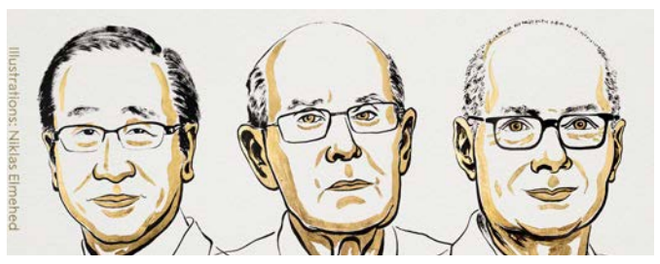
Union minister Chirag Paswan's Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), which had earlier settled for around 20-22 seats, is now asking for 25 more. Senior leaders in the LJP (RV) believe that the party should get at least 45 seats.

In the Mahagathbandhan, sources said, the RJD is likely to contest 135-140 seats. The party has offered the Congress 50-52 seats, lower than the party's demand of 70 seats. The VIP (Vikassheel Insaan Party), another constituent of the INDIA bloc, is adamant on contesting at least 40 seats. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

EC ASKS CENTRE TO COMPLY WITH CODE OF CONDUCT FOR POLICIES

The Election Commission (EC) on Wednesday said the provisions of model code of conduct are also applicable to the Central government as far as announcements and policy decisions on Bihar are concerned. The poll code came into force immediately after the EC announced the schedule for the Assembly elections in Bihar on Monday. Among other things, the model code of conduct says, privacy of citizens must be respected, with no demonstrations or picketing outside private residences. "Land, buildings, or walls shall not be used for flags, banners or posters without the owner's consent," it said.



Illustrations: Niklas Elmehed

'Hermione's handbag' gets trio Nobel in Chemistry

STOCKHOLM, 8 OCT

Scientists Susumu Kitagawa, Richard Robson and Omar M Yaghi won the Nobel Prize in chemistry on Wednesday for their work in the development of metal–organic frameworks that dates back to 1989.

The Nobel committee said that the three laureates "have developed a new form of molecular architecture... They have created molecular constructions with large spaces through which gases and other chemicals can flow. These constructions, metal-organic frameworks, can be used to harvest water from desert air, capture carbon dioxide, store toxic gases or catalyse chemical reactions."

Heiner Linke, the chairman of the committee likened the discovery to "Hermoione's handbag".

Robson, 88, is affiliated with the University of Melbourne in Australia, Kitagawa, 74, with Japan's Kyoto University and Yaghi, 60, with the University of California, Berkeley.

Working separately, they devised ways to make stable metal organic frameworks. Their work used advanced technologies, including artificial intelligence. *—PTI*

Chances of war with India are real: Pak Defence Minister

ISLAMABAD, 8 OCT

Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has warned that "chances of war with India are real".

Asif made the remarks in an interview with Samaa TV on Tuesday, where the anchor asked him about recent statements by the Indian political and military leaders.

"Chances of war with India are real," Asif responded. "I do not want escalation, but the risks are real... If it comes to war, God willing, we will achieve a better result than before."

He said that Pakistan has more supporters and allies than it had six months ago, while claiming that India had even lost the support of the countries which were on its side before the May conflict.

Asif also claimed that India was never a united nation, except briefly under Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, while Pakistan stood united during confrontations.

Raytheon's AIM-120 Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missiles; Pakistan Defence Minister Khawaja Asif ***PHOTO: RAYTHEON***

> **History shows that India was never one united nation, except briefly under Aurangzeb.**
>
> —Khawaja Asif, Pakistan's Defence Minister

US TO SELL PAK MISSILES

Pakistan is likely to receive the AIM-120 Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missiles (AMRAAM) from the US.

An arms contract recently notified by the United States Department of War (DoW) lists Pakistan among the buyers for AIM-120 AMRAAM, among other nations such as the UK, Germany, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Israel.

The value of the contract is over $2.51 billion. *—PTI*

SC acquits Chennai techie in 2017 child rape-murder case

NEW DELHI, 8 OCT

The Supreme Court on Wednesday set aside the conviction and death sentence of Chennai techie Dhasvanth in the 2017 rape and murder of a seven-year-old girl, ruling that the prosecution "miserably failed to prove the vital circumstances."

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath, Sanjay Karol, and Sandeep Mehta said there was no credible evidence to establish that the accused was last seen with the child or that CCTV footage or forensic reports linked him to the crime. The court said the accused was made a "scapegoat" by the police.

The apex court ordered his immediate release.

Dhasvanth was sentenced to death by a Chengalpet court in 2018, later upheld by the Madras High Court. The child was lured, assaulted, and killed near her Mugalivakkam residence. *—Agencies*

'GREED CAUSES CYBER-CRIME'

Robust public transport is the answer to traffic congestion

BENGALURU, 8, OCT

Karnataka Director-General and Inspector-General of Police MA Saleem is popularly known for the 122 one ways he introduced in Bengaluru when he was in charge of traffic management in various posts. The third Muslim to head the top post after AR Nizamuddin in 1990 and Abdul Rahman Infant in 2012, Saleem in an interaction with **Salar News** on Wednesday spells out the reasons for the traffic choke in Bengaluru and other major cities in the State.

With a doctorate in traffic management and being credited for making 122 roads one-way in Bengaluru, what do you think is the solution for the traffic situation in the City today?

The basic problem in Bengaluru is capacity. The capacity of the roads is limited compared to the volume of traffic, and this is the reason for traffic congestion. We made arterial roads like Cunningham Road, Commercial Street, Richmond Town one-way which is the reason why traffic moves in the CBD district with ease, but we have problems in new areas like Whitefield, South East and Airport areas. Besides, our share of public transport is very small. Only 47 per cent of trips in Bengaluru are by public transport and the rest 53 per cent by private vehicles. In the Western countries

SALAR EXCLUSIVE

almost 85 per cent is public transport. Even in cities like Mumbai, 82 per cent of the population uses public transport.

Do you have plans to extend the Public Eye (citizens participation in traffic management) introduced by you in Bengaluru and Mysuru to other districts?

The Public Eye will be successful if we have a robust Intelligent Traffic Management Systems (ITMS) capturing the violations automatically and challans are issued. Unless this facility is there with the district police, it may not be feasible to start the Public Eye. We are currently developing the ITMS in other cities for this purpose.

Home Minister G Parameshwara recently said that during peak traffic hours, he has not seen the police managing the traffic system....

When I was in charge of traffic I would start the day at 8.30am and be on the road, because that is the only way to manage traffic. We are asking all traffic officers, particularly DCPs and Joint CP traffic and ACPs to come early and be on the road. Unless there are senior officers are on the road, it is very difficult to take decisions, if there is any problem.

These days we see a rising trend in cyber-crimes. As the top cop in Karnataka, what do you suggest citizens do not to fall prey to such fraud?

Greed is one of the main reasons for cyber-crimes. Secondly, one should have knowledge and information about the gadgets one is using. For example, how does one safely use the phone locking systems to ensure one's privacy and how does one prevent sensitive data from falling into random hands. It is also important to remember that there is nothing like a free lunch. When somebody offers you some freebie, be on the guard. *—Salar News*

>>>More on Page 2

DGP & IG MA Saleem ***PHOTO: SALAR***

PHOTO: PTI

Action to be taken against those killing wildlife: CM

BENGALURU, 8 OCT

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday warned that strict action will be taken against those who kill wildlife. The CM's warning came in the wake of the poisoning of two tigers and four tiger cubs to death in Male Mahadeshwara hills in Chamarajanagar district and the electrocution of an elephant in Channapatna in Ramanagara district a few days ago. Speaking after presenting the Chief Minister's medals to Forest and Environment Department personnel at the valedictory of the 71st Wildlife Week celebrations, the chief minister said, "If forests survive, the earth will survive. Forests and wild lives are inseparable, and those who destroy them will face the consequences, " he said. The CM said the Wildlife Week is being observed to promote the idea of coexistence between humans and wildlife. *—PTI*

30 injured as private bus falls into canal in Kolar

KOLAR, 8 OCT

Around 30 people were injured when a private bus carrying over 50 passengers slipped into a roadside canal near Sugatur under Kolar Rural police limits around midnight on Tuesday. The bus was en route to Chintamani from Kolar after a wedding reception when the driver lost control. Six seriously injured passengers have been admitted to SNR and Jalappa Hospitals in Kolar, while others were treated and discharged, police said. The guests, from Chintamani and Sidlaghatta taluks, had attended a wedding reception at Rathana Convention Hall in Kolar. Kolar Rural Police rushed to the spot and arranged for the injured to be shifted to hospitals. *—Salar News*

Massive job mela in Mysuru on 17 October

MYSURU, 8 OCT

Zilla Panchayat CEO S Ukeshkumar on Wednesday announced that a divisional-level job mela will be held on 17 October at Maharaja College Grounds, Mysuru. Around 200 reputed companies will participate, offering opportunities for graduates, postgraduates, diploma, PUC, and SSLC holders. Over 16,000 candidates have already registered through https://udyogmela.ksdckarnataka.com/user/signup. He directed officials to ensure participation of Yuva Nidhi scheme beneficiaries, with 11,000 unemployed youth currently registered under the scheme. Committees have been formed to ensure smooth conduct of the event. He also instructed the Joint Director of District Industries and Commerce to ensure participation of local private firms. The District Skill Development Officer and other officials were present. *—Salar News*

Army signs MoU to boost AI-enabled drone capabilities

BENGALURU, 8 OCT

The 515 Army Base Workshop (515 ABW) and IndyASTRA Technologies Pvt Ltd have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to accelerate AI-enabled drone capabilities for Indian Army Land Systems. The collaboration aims to infuse advanced technologies, focusing on AI-driven Flight Control Systems (FCS) and a Standard Drone Operating Platform (SDOP), according to the Defence PRO. IndyASTRA will provide technical consultancy for evaluating drone subsystems, integration readiness, and compliance with Army standards. 515 ABW will seek support for trials, validation, and certification, prioritising interoperability, safety, and standards. *—PTI*

Dalits are unsafe under Modi govt: Kharge

City cops register FIR against lawyer who hurled shoe at CJI, Kharge seeks punitive action

BENGALURU, 8 OCT

Congress President **Mallikarjun Kharge** on Wednesday claimed that there is no respect and safety for Dalit citizens under the present Central Government, irrespective of whether it is an ordinary person or someone who holds a high position. He was referring to a recent incident where a lawyer attempted to hurl a shoe towards Chief Justice of India BR Gavai in the Supreme Court, and the alleged lynching of a man from the Valmiki community in Uttar Pradesh.

Kharge demanded punitive action against those who want to snatch away the fundamental rights of the people in the name of "Manusmriti and Sanatana Dharma", and disturb peace in society.

"A person claiming to be a lawyer has attempted to hurl a shoe towards the Chief Justice of India taking the name of a religion. I have condemned it personally, also on behalf of the party. Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi (Congress leaders) have also condemned it. Though late, our Prime Minister too has condemned it," Kharge said.

Advocates protest in Bengaluru on Wednesday, demanding the arrest of advocate Rakesh Kishore for allegedly hurling shoes at CJI B.R. Gavai in the Supreme Court *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

Speaking to reporters here, he said the government should take strict action against the person who tried to insult the Chief Justice in the Supreme Court in the name of religion and on the basis of an ideology to destroy society.

He also condemned the lynching of a man from the Valmiki community in the Raebareli district of Uttar Pradesh and said that it shows the extent to which the law and order in UP has deteriorated. "If the man had committed anything wrong, a case could have been registered and got him arrested, instead of people taking the law into their hands," he added.

Citing both incidents, the AICC chief claimed that the Dalit citizens, be it an ordinary person or someone who holds a high position -- "there is no respect under this government." Additionally, City police registered a zero FIR against Rakesh Kishore on Wednesday. The FIR was registered under various sections of BNS. *—PTI*

I ADMIRE YOUR COURAGE: BHASKAR RAO PRAISES LAWYER; FACES FLAK

BENGALURU, 8 OCT

Former Bengaluru Police Commissioner and BJP leader **Bhaskar Rao** has praised advocate Rakesh Kishore, who had attempted to hurl a shoe at the Chief Justice of India BR Gavai.

"Even if it is legally & terribly wrong, I admire your courage, at your age, to take a stand and live by it, irrespective of consequences," Rao said on Tuesday in a post on 'X'.

The post enraged many 'X' users. Expressing shock, Nitin Seshadri said, "Sir I didn't expect this from you. Wasn't this similar to the language used to defend Nathuram Godse & Narayan Apte in their trials?"

One user tagged the Bengaluru police saying, "@BlrCityPolice, you need to act upon this tweet!" Rao later apologised in a subsequent social media post on Wednesday.

"My reaction was one of aghast and shock that a person, despite being so highly educated, aged and experienced such an action knowing fully the consequences of a terribly and legally wrong act. I have not insulted the Supreme Court, nor Chief Justice or any Community. If my tweet has angered or hurt, I am sorry," the retired IPS officer said. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

- One user tagged the Bengaluru police saying, "@BlrCityPolice, you need to act upon this tweet!" Rao later apologised in a subsequent social media post on Wednesday.

CALL FOR JUDICIAL PROBE INTO ATTACK ON CJI

BR Gavai

BENGALURU, 8 OCT

Ramesh Babu, MLC and Chairman of the KPCC Media & Communication Department, has urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to order a judicial inquiry into a casteist and inflammatory attack on the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India by a self-proclaimed 'Sanatani' advocate. In a strongly worded petition, Babu criticised the PM's lack of concrete action, warning that mere condemnation is insufficient.

He demanded a probe by a sitting or retired Supreme Court judge, immediate arrest under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and Contempt of Courts Act, and a public assurance reaffirming the government's commitment to secular, democratic values. He also called for a ban on the misuse of religious identity to threaten constitutional institutions.

Babu stressed that inaction would embolden ideological groups, warning that Sanatanis are unwilling to accept a Dalit as Chief Justice. *—SALAR NEWS*

BJP's Yuva Morcha leader killed in Koppal over rivalry

KOPPAL, 8 OCT

BJP Yuva Morcha leader of **Gangavati, Venkatesh Kurubara**, 34, was brutally murdered in the early hours of dnes, reportedly due to long-standing personal enmity.

The incident occurred around 2am in the wee hours of Wednesday near Leelavati Hospital on Koppal Road when a gang in a Tata Indica (KA 01 AC 8729) rammed Venkatesh's bike and attacked him with machetes and iron rods. He was dragged to the roadside and hacked to death. The attackers fled after their car's tyre burst in HRS Colony, where it was later recovered along with deadly weapons.

Venkatesh was returning from dinner with friends after attending a religious event. His friend Ramu, an eyewitness, said the gang threatened and chased them before attacking Venkatesh.

Police have arrested four accused: Bhima, 23; Salim, 21; Vijay, 25; and Dhanraj Rao, 24. Two more are absconding.

Police said that a Tata Indica, said to be used by the assailants, had been recovered. It is said that the assailants were trying to flee to Bangalore in the car before the vehicle had to be abandoned due to a tyre burst.

Koppal SP Ram L Arasiddhi confirmed the murder stemmed from a 2023 police case in which Venkatesh helped arrest key suspects linked to Ravi, who held a grudge ever since.

Venkatesh's father, Hampanya Jantakal, said Ravi had previously threatened his son over WhatsApp in 2024. A case was filed at Gangavati Nagar Police Station, but Venkatesh lived in fear since, constantly moving and staying with friends. One of them, Prajwal, was also injured and hospitalised.

A case has been registered under multiple sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. Police are reviewing CCTV footage and continuing probe.

State BJP President BY Vijayendra expressed deep condolences and called the killing heartbreaking. *—Salar News*

DKS likens City traffic to UK's, says it is global problem

BENGALURU, 8 OCT

Deputy Chief Minister **DK Shivakumar** on Wednesday described Bengaluru's traffic woes as a global and national issue, citing London and Delhi as examples.

Speaking at a panel discussion organised by B.PAC and Mount Carmel College, he said, "Even in London, people take three hours to travel without public transport. Delhi to Parliament from the airport takes 1.5 hours. But Bengaluru makes more noise due to vibrant media and social media freedom."

As City Development Minister, he highlighted major challenges — mobility, solid waste, and drinking water — while pointing to the delay in garbage reforms due to a "big mafia." He said the proposed Greater Bengaluru Authority would streamline governance and inter-departmental coordination. He announced plans to expand to 369 civic wards with 50 per cent reservation for women.

PHOTO: PTI

10-DAY SCHOOL HOLIDAY WILL AID SURVEY

Shivakumar supported the state's decision to declare a 10-day holiday for government and aided schools till 18 October to enable teachers to serve as enumerators in the ongoing Social and Educational Survey. He noted 90 per cent rural participation and urged Bengalureans to cooperate. *— Salar News*

Professor held for sexually harassing student in City

BENGALURU, 8 OCT

A 45-year-old professor of a private university was arrested for allegedly sexually harassing a 19-year-old undergraduate student at his residence last month, police said on Wednesday.

The student, in her complaint, has alleged that on 25 September, the professor had invited her to lunch at his residence. He had even spoken to her mother and assured the mother that his wife and children would be there at home.

According to the complaint, the mother had given the victim permission to visit the professor at his house for lunch. However on reaching home, the victim found that his wife and children were out of station and would be back only a month later. The professor also allegedly started asking the victim personal questions and began pressuring her to break up with her boyfriend. He also promised to assist her with marks and attendance if she complied with his request, the complainant said.

The victim also alleged that accused touched her inappropriately and sexually harassed her, despite her objecting to his advances. He also warned her against disclosing about the incident to anyone and claimed that he was merely "testing her loyalty" towards her boyfriend. On leaving his house, the girl went to the Tilak Nagar police station and filed a complaint, police said.

"Based on a complaint received, we registered a case under Section 75 (sexual harassment) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. The accused professor was arrested and later released on station bail," a police officer said. *—PTI*

HARDWORK PAYS

Governor Thawarchand Gehlot presents a degree certificate to outgoing student Tahaseena Mavinakatti, as gold medallists are felicitated during the 60th Bangalore University Convocation at Jnana Jyothi Auditorium in Bengaluru on Wednesday *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

DKS backs 'Bigg Boss Kannada' studio

BENGALURU, 8 OCT

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Wednesday defended Vels Studios' hosting of 'Bigg Boss Kannada, after it was sealed by the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) for violating environmental norms.

Shivakumar said entertainment programmes like Bigg Boss generate employment and should continue. "I've advised that they be given an opportunity to resolve the issues.

All entertainment programmes are important for the state's economy," he told reporters.

Vels Studios and Entertainment Pvt Ltd (Jolly Wood Studios), where Bigg Boss Kannada is being filmed, was shut down for operating without mandatory environmental clearances under the Water and Air Acts.

"I inaugurated the studio myself. I've sought a report from the Bengaluru South DC. The KSPCB acted lawfully, but employment and private investment must also be considered," Shivakumar said.

When asked about Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy's cryptic tweet, "nut and bolt tightened", Shivakumar retorted, "Unless Kumaraswamy remembers me every day, he won't find peace or sleep."

Meanwhile, Bengaluru South DC Yeshwanth V Gurukar confirmed that Vels Studios has requested 10 days to comply with regulations. "Their request has been forwarded to KSPCB. Further action will depend on their decision," he said. *—ANI*

'COPS CARRY BRITISH LEGACY'

Safe Route to Schools has not been successful: Saleem

BENGALURU, 8 OCT

SALAR EXCLUSIVE

What has the police force done to make Bengaluru safe for women and late-night travellers?

Bengaluru is largely a very safe City for women and for every section of society. After the Safe City Project was implemented, we now have a network of 7,500 cameras across the City, which are constantly monitored and stream video in real time.

Additionally, the Bengaluru Police have created safety islands for women. If there's a problem, women can go to the nearest safety island and, with just the click of a button, receive immediate assistance. Everything is captured on camera, and help arrives quickly. Bengaluru also has pink Hoysalas available exclusively for women in distress.

Which city in the world do you think is safest for women or the general public?

Cities in the Nordic countries, particularly Scandinavian, and even the Gulf countries are among the safest. In Scandinavia, it's due to the high quality of life. In the Gulf, it's the fear of strict law enforcement that ensures safety.

Your 'Safe Route to Schools' initiative became popular. Are there plans to extend it to other districts?

Yes. The 'Safe Route' programme started in 2005 to decongest roads around schools. The idea was to encourage students to use public transport, school buses, or vans, and discourage large cars dropping off just one child. For example, Residency Road would get heavily congested around 3 pm.

However, we haven't been as successful in reducing traffic as we hoped. That said, we have achieved our goal in terms of improving school children's safety.

What are the checks and balances in the police force?

Compared to any other government department, the police are the most punitive. Even small misdemeanours are punished severely. You often see in the media how many officers are suspended or prosecuted, disciplinary action is far greater than in other departments.

Since we deal directly with people's lives, we must maintain top-class standards. One small mistake by a police officer can lead to serious consequences. We also have a grievance redressal mechanism and a Police Complaints Authority headed by a retired High Court judge, something no other department has. But the public must also come forward with complaints.

What is being done to build public trust, considering the police are often feared?

Unfortunately, we still live with the legacy of British colonial rule. The police laws and structures were created to serve colonial interests. The colonial government wanted the police to be brutal to suppress public aspirations. Since Independence, there have been significant efforts to transform the police from a 'force' to a 'service.' It's taken over seven decades, and while much has changed, some legacy attitudes still remain. *—Salar News*

AG's nod sought for action against man who attacked CJI

NEW DELHI, 8 OCT

An advocate has requested Attorney General R Venkataramani's consent to initiate criminal contempt proceedings against lawyer Rakesh Kishore, 71, after he attempted to throw a shoe at Chief Justice of India BR Gavai in the Supreme Court on Monday. Kishore reportedly shouted slogans defending Sanatan Dharma. The Bar Council of India immediately suspended his licence. The plea described Kishore's actions as a "gross interference with the administration of justice" and an attempt to undermine the dignity of the Supreme Court. His subsequent media comments were also cited as evidence of intending to scandalise the court. The SC criticised the CBI and Madhya Pradesh government for delaying the arrest of two policemen accused in the custodial death of a 24-year-old man. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

No family harassed as much as Azam Khan's: Akhilesh

RAMPUR, 8 OCT

SP Chief Akhilesh Yadav met senior party leader Azam Khan at his Rampur residence on Wednesday and inquired about his health. The former Uttar Pradesh chief minister said Khan has been subjected to "unprecedented harassment" by the state's BJP government. Describing the cases lodged against Khan and his family members as "false and politically-motivated", he said, "No family has been harassed as much as Azam Khan sahab's. The BJP seems to be making a Guinness Record for filing the maximum number of fake cases against one political family." This was the first meeting between the two leaders after Khan's release from the Sitapur jail last month. Yadav expressed hope for justice. *—PTI*

TVK moves SC challenging HC's SIT probe order

NEW DELHI, 8 OCT

Tamil actor Vijay's political party Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam has moved the Supreme Court challenging the Madras High Court order constituting a SIT to probe the Karur stampede that killed 41 people. The apex court agreed to hear the plea on Friday. A bench comprising Chief Justice BR Gavai and Justice K Vinod Chandran took note of the submissions of a lawyer that the plea, filed through TVK's secretary Aadhav Arjuna, be listed for hearing. Additionally, a TN BJP leader has moved the Supreme Court, seeking a CBI probe into the stampede. The plea, filed by GS Mani has also sought a stay on the probe into the incident. *—PTI*

Current TDB has no link with bizman Potty: Board

PATHANAMTHITTA/ T'PURAM, 8 OCT

Amid the raging gold-plating row in Sabarimala Lord Ayyappa temple here, the Chief of the board managing the shrine on Wednesday said its current members have no connection with a businessman who had sponsored the gold-plating works. Travancore Devaswom Board President PS Prasanth denied the involvement of any TDB members in the alleged irregularities in gold plating of the temple's 'Dwarapalaka' idols -- an issue which has stirred up the political waters in Kerala. Additionally, in Kerala Assembly on Wednesday, a scuffle broke out between the Opposition UDF members and watch-and-ward personnel when the MLAs were seeking the resignation of the Devaswom minister. They exchanged heated words. *—PTI*

3 Indian movies to be shot in UK from 2026: Starmer

Starmer visits YRF Studios; To create over 3,000 jobs

MUMBAI, 8 OCT

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Wednesday visited the Yash Raj Films (YRF) Studios in suburban Andheri and announced that major Indian production houses including the YRF will make movies across locations in the UK.

The British PM, on a two-day visit to India, was accompanied by a delegation of his country's film industry including representatives of the British Film Institute, British Film Commission, Pinewood Studios, Elstree Studios and Civic Studios.

Flying in from London earlier in the day, Starmer drove to the YRF Studios amid heavy police security.

He met several Indian producers including YRF CEO Akshaye Widhwani, YRF chairperson Aditya Chopra's actor wife Rani Mukerji, Dinesh Vijan from Maddock Films, Ritesh Sidhwani of Excel Entertainment and Apoorva Mehta of Dharma Productions, among others, a source said.

United Kingdom Prime Minister Keir Starmer with Bollywood actor Rani Mukerji and Yash Raj Films (YRF) CEO Akshaye Widhani during a visit to YRF studio, in Mumbai on Wednesday *PHOTO: PTI*

"Bollywood is back in Britain, and it is bringing jobs, investment and opportunity, all while showcasing the UK as a world-class destination for global filmmaking...," Starmer said in a statement.

The meeting between the British prime minister and Indian producers lasted for about 30 to 40 minutes, a source said.

Widhani said they were honoured to host the British PM.

Yash Raj Films said they aim to bring their major productions across locations in the UK from early 2026.

YRF has confirmed plans to bring their major productions to locations across the United Kingdom from early 2026, creating over 3,000 jobs and boosting the economy by millions of pounds, Starmer said.

"It is truly special to reignite YRF and UK's filming ties.... Our company is currently producing a stage adaptation of DDLJ, 'Come Fall in Love' in the UK too," Widhani said.

Meanwhile, British Airways plans to start an additional flight connecting London and Delhi in 2026 as the airline looks to increase air connectivity between India and the UK, with the free trade agreement set to boost economic activities. The airline made the announcement on Wednesday as UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer is leading the 'Britain Means Business' trade mission to the country. *—PTI*

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurates Phase One of the Navi Mumbai International Airport on Wednesday *PHOTO: PTI*

PM inaugurates Navi Mumbai airport

MUMBAI, 8 OCT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday inaugurated phase one of the Navi Mumbai International Airport, built at a cost of Rs 19,650 crore. The new airport, spread over 1,160 hectares, is set to significantly boost India's aviation capacity and ease the heavy traffic burden on Mumbai's existing Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport. It is India's largest greenfield airport project. Modi also inaugurated Phase 2B of the Mumbai Metro Line-3 and launched the Mumbai One app which offers commuters a range of benefits.

Cong must tell who barred action post 26/11 attack

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said the Congress should tell the nation who prevented India's military response after the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack. "This weakness of Congress strengthened terrorists," Modi said. "For us, nothing is more important than the safety and security of our nation and its citizens," Modi said, referring to Operation Sindoor launched after the Pahalgam terror attack. The government's target is to make India the global aviation's maintenance, repair and overhaul hub by the end of this decade. *—PTI*

2 arrested for attack on BJP MP and MLA in Bengal

NEW DELHI, 8 OCT

Two people have been arrested in connection with the attack on BJP leaders Khagen Murmu and Sankar Ghosh in flood-affected north Bengal, police said on Wednesday.

Murmu, MP from Malda Uttar, and Siliguri MLA Ghosh were attacked by a mob on Monday in Jalpaiguri's Nagrakata area while assessing flood damage.

Jalpaiguri SP Khandbahale Umesh Ganpat confirmed the arrests and said an investigation is ongoing. "One arrest was made in Jalpaiguri, and the other near Jaigaon on the India-Bhutan border in Alipurduar," he said. Eight individuals have been named in the FIR.

The BJP blamed Trinamool Congress (TMC) for the attack—a charge the ruling party has denied. BJP spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla accused CM Mamata Banerjee of fostering a "Talibani mindset" and protecting the culprits.

He claimed that political violence is being "institutionalised, normalised, and legitimised" under the TMC regime and criticised the opposition INDIA bloc for its silence.

BJP MLA Manoj Kumar Oraon was also allegedly attacked by TMC workers while distributing relief in Alipurduar.

Amit Shah is behaving like he is the acting Prime Minister of this country. Modi must not trust Shah always as he will turn out to be your biggest Mir Zafar

-Mamata Banerjee, West Bengal Chief Minister

Murmu, a tribal MP, and Ghosh sustained injuries during their visit to the flood-hit Dooars region, which has seen landslides and extensive damage. Meanwhile, a five-member TMC team left for Tripura to support party workers after a party office was allegedly vandalised by BJP youth wing members. *—PTI*

17th Bihar Assembly met for just 146 days

NEW DELHI, 8 OCT

The outgoing Bihar legislative assembly met for a total of 146 days, the lowest of all its five-year terms, a legislative think-tank has said.

The outgoing 17th assembly met for an average of 29 days a year and on the days the House met, it functioned for an average of three hours. In 2024, assemblies across all states met for an average of five hours on sitting days, an analysis by PRS Legislative said.

Bihar will go to polls in two phases on 6 and 11 November and the votes will be counted on 14 November.

The 17th assembly passed 78 Bills and all the laws were passed on the day of their introduction. None of the Bills were referred to any committee for further deliberation. The majority were related to education, finance and taxation, and administration. Some of these Bills included the Bihar Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024, the Bihar Control of Crimes Bill, 2024, and the Platform Based Gig Workers (Registration, Safety and Welfare) Bill, 2025. In 2023, the assembly passed two Bills to increase reservation in government jobs and educational institutions. *—PTI*

Give HAM 15 seats or won't contest polls: Manjhi warns NDA

PATNA, 8 OCT

In signs of unease within the NDA ahead of the Bihar election, ally Jitan Ram Manjhi has said that if his party, Hindustan Awam Morcha, is not given at least 15 seats to contest, it won't fight the elections at all. The former Chief Minister, however, has made it clear that it would stay in the NDA camp. BJP chief JP Nadda, it is learnt, has spoken to Manjhi to pacify him.s.

The former Bihar chief minister came out with a post on his X handle, which seemed inspired from a famous passage in Ramdhari Singh Dinkar's war poem "Rashmirathi", wherein Lord Krishna had tried to broker peace with Duryodhana, whose obstinacy led to the epic battle of Mahabharata.

"Ho Nyay Aagar To Aadha Do (give us half of the pie if you wish to do justice)", wrote Manjhi, apparently addressing the BJP, three days after senior leaders Dharmendra Pradhan and Vinod Tawde had visited his house to discuss seat sharing.

Notably, Manjhi has been demanding at least 15 seats for HAM with the plea that his party must win at least eight to get the "recognised" status from the Election Commission, which has eluded the outfit. *—PTI*

MLA Murari Gautam resigns

Former Bihar Minister Murari Prasad Gautam on Wednesday resigned as MLA ahead of the Assembly elections. Speculations are rife that he may join BJP. Gautam said there was no specific reason behind his resignation. He was elected to the Assembly on Congress ticket. HE was a minister in the Nitish Kumar government. —PTI

Wangchuk's wife visits him in jail

JODHPUR, 8 OCT

Geetanjali Angmo on Wednesday said she had visited her husband, Sonam Wangchuk, in Jodhpur jail, where he was lodged in the wake of the 24 September Leh violence.

Angmo met the climate activist on Tuesday along with lawyer Ritam Khare.

She said Wangchuk's legal team has obtained the detention order, which will be challenged in court.

His spirit is undaunted and his commitment resolute, Angmo wrote in apost.

The document lists the allegations against Wangchuk and the reasons for the invocation of the National Security Act against him. On Saturday, Wangchuk's brother, Tsetan Dorje, also visited him in jail with lawyer Mustafa Haji. After the visit, Haji on X said Wangchuk has demanded an independent judicial inquiry into the killing of four people during last month's protest. He wrote that Wangchuk said that he is willing to remain in jail until such an inquiry is conducted. *—PTI*

ED: No concept of digital or online arrest under PMLA

NEW DELHI, 8 OCT

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has clarified that there is no concept of "digital" or online arrest under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). All arrests by the federal agency are carried out physically and in person. The statement comes amid growing instances of cyber fraud in which criminals impersonate ED officials, sending fake summons to extort money.

The ED said summons under PMLA and FEMA are issued through a secure system featuring a QR code, unique pass code, official signature, stamp, and contact details. This allows individuals to verify the authenticity of any summons they receive. *—PTI*

CBI to not oppose acquittal in Sohrabuddin case

MUMBAI, 8 OCT

Nearly seven years after a special CBI court acquitted all 22 accused in the alleged fake encounter case of gangster Sohrabuddin Shaikh and his aide Tulsiram Prajapati, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has told the Bombay High Court it will not challenge the verdict.

On Wednesday, Additional Solicitor General Anil Singh informed a bench comprising Chief Justice Shree Chandrashekhar and Justice Gautam Ankhad that the agency had accepted the 2018 judgement.

The special court had acquitted the accused citing lack of evidence and failure to prove any conspiracy or nexus between police officers and local politicians.

Shaikh was allegedly killed in a fake encounter by Gujarat Police in November 2005 near Ahmedabad. His wife Kausar Bi also went missing and was allegedly killed. In December 2006, Tulsiram Prajapati—an eyewitness—was also killed in a separate encounter.

The Supreme Court had transferred the case to the CBI, and the trial was moved to Mumbai.

Sohrabuddin's brothers, Rubabuddin and Nayabuddin Shaikh, appealed the acquittals in 2019, claiming witness testimonies were misrecorded. The High Court has asked them to submit a chart detailing discrepancies and posted the matter for further hearing on October 15. *—PTI*

4 held for man's lynching in Raebareli, NSA invoked

RAEBARELI, 8 OCT

Police have arrested four more people in connection with the lynching of a Dalit man by villagers who mistook him for a thief in the Unchahar area of Raebareli district, officials said on Wednesday.

Police said the stringent Gangsters Act and the National Security Act (NSA) will be invoked against the accused, and cautioned against attempts to give the incident a casteist slant, saying the accused were unaware of the victim's caste.

While the NSA empowers states to detain individuals to prevent them from acting in a manner "prejudicial to the defence of India" with a maximum detention period of 12 months, which can be revoked earlier, the Uttar Pradesh Gangsters and Anti-Social Activities (Prevention) Act, 1986, is aimed at combating organised crime by making special provisions to deal with gangsters and anti-social activities. Hariom Valmiki, 40, was reportedly lynched by villagers who mistook him for a thief during a night vigil at about 1am on 2 October. *—PTI*

PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

- Hariom Valmiki, 40, was lynched by villagers who mistook him for a thief during a night vigil at about 1am.

JOINED ARMY TO AVOID DRUGS CASE

Youth held by Ukrainian forces had gone to Russia for studies

MORBI, 8 OCT

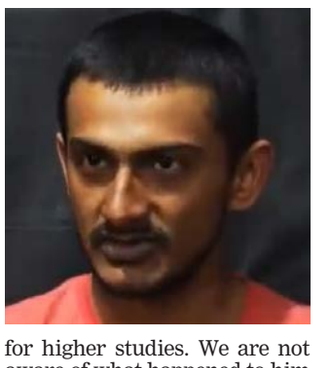
Majoti Sahil Mohammed Hussein, a Gujarat resident who had travelled to Russia for further studies, got himself enlisted in the Russian military to avoid a prison sentence in a drug-related case.

He joined the Russian army to surrender the moment he got a chance to reach the Ukraine border.

appeared before the media and appealed to the Centre to bring back his nephew and other Indians stuck in the war zone.

Hussein used to live with his mother, who got separated from his father two decades ago, and his maternal grandparents in Morbi.

"Sahil (Hussein) went abroad for higher studies. We are not aware of what happened to him there," his maternal uncle Abdul Ibrahim Majoti said.



Hussein was a bright student since childhood, said the uncle.

The Ukrainian military had announced on Tuesday that an Indian national fighting alongside the Russian forces had surrendered. The 63rd Mechanised Brigade of the Ukrainian military released a video of Hussein from Gujarat.

In the video, Hussein said, "I didn't want to stay in prison, so I signed a contract... But I wanted to get out of there." After just 16 days of training, he was sent to the front and surrendered quickly following a dispute with his commander.

"I came across a Ukrainian trench position about two to three kilometres away. I immediately put down my rifle and said that I didn't want to fight. I needed help. I don't want to go back to Russia," he said in the video.

There has been no official word from the external affairs ministry so far. *—PTI*

Tagore's Odisha home to be turned into museum

BHUBANESWAR, 8 OCT

The Odisha government on Wednesday decided to restore Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore's residence in Puri and convert it into a museum, Minister Suryavanshi Suraj said. The house, 'Pather Puri,' previously served as a boys' hostel for Samanta Chandra Sekhar College students before being abandoned. INTACH Odisha coordinator Anil Dhir said the land was allotted to Tagore in 1939, and the family later donated the building for educational use. "The building is heritage-listed and needs restoration after damage from cyclone Fani in 2019," Dhir said. The government has consulted INTACH for conservation. The high-level meeting also approved a 'Theme Pavilion' on eminent Odia writers for the Cuttack Bali Yatra starting on 5 November. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

Punjabi singer Rajvir dies 11 days after crash

CHANDIGARH, 8 OCT

Punjabi actor-singer Rajvir Jawanda, 35, died at a Mohali hospital on Wednesday, 11 days after a road accident in Himachal Pradesh. Hospital authorities said he succumbed to multiple organ failure despite intensive care. Jawanda, known for hits like 'Kali Jawande Di,' was critically injured on 27 September while traveling to Shimla on a motorcycle. He sustained head and spine injuries in the accident and suffered cardiac arrest before being hospitalised. Celebrities and politicians, including Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, expressed grief. Mann said, "The star of Punjabi music has disappeared forever. His voice will always resonate." AAP leader Manish Sisodia added, "Gone too soon, but his soulful voice will live on." *—PTI*

MP man lynched on suspicion of doing black magic

CHHATARPUR, 8 OCT

A 60-year-old tribal man was allegedly lynched by a mob in Madhya Pradesh's Chhatarpur district on suspicion of practising black magic, police said on Wednesday. The attack occurred on Tuesday in Jhamatuli village under the Bamitha police station area. The victim, identified as Kamta Adivasi, was reportedly beaten to death by villagers who accused him of performing black magic rituals. Khajuraho Sub-Divisional Police Officer Manmohan Baghel said officers reached the scene soon after being alerted and launched an investigation. "A murder case has been registered, and at least two individuals believed to be part of the mob have been detained for questioning," he confirmed. Adivasi was known to perform exorcism, which reportedly led some locals to suspect him of sorcery. A probe is underway. *—PTI*

4 dead, 6 injured in Chattisgarh plant accident

SAKTI, 8 OCT

Four workers were killed and six others injured after a lift collapsed from a height at a power plant in Chhattisgarh's Sakti district. The incident took place on Tuesday night at RKM Powergen Pvt Ltd's plant in Dabhra area of Ucchpinda village in the district, Sakti Superintendent of Police Ankita Sharma said. 10 workers were inside the lift and descending to the ground after their routine work when the lift crashed. The workers were rushed to a hospital in Raigarh, where four of them succumbed to injuries during treatment. Six others are undergoing treatment. An investigation was underway to ascertain the cause that led to the crashing of the lift that killed the four men. *—PTI*

Death toll rises to 16 as rescue ends in HP landslide

Deceased's kin to get Rs 2 L ex-gratia, Rs 50K for injured

SHIMLA, 8 OCT

The death toll in Himachal Pradesh's Bilaspur district, where a private bus was buried under the debris of a massive landslide on Tuesday evening, increased to 16 with the recovery of a child's body on Wednesday morning.

Search and rescue operations to trace people buried under the debris continued after a huge portion of a mountain gave way and fell on the moving bus in the Bhalughat area near Berthin on 7 September.

A manual search is underway with dog squads being pressed into service to search the victims along with machinery to remove the heavy rocks.

The deceased were identified as Naksh, Aarav, Sanjeev, Vimla, Kamlesh, Kanta Devi, Anjana, Bakshi Ram, Narender Sharma, Krishan Lal, Chuni Lal, Rajnish, Sonu, Sharif Khan and Praveen Kumar.

The deceased include four members of a family -- the wives of two brothers and two children of one sibling -- who were returning home after attending a function.

The children of the other sibling -- Arushi and Shaurya -- were among those rescued and were being treated at AIIMS Bilaspur.

"My wife and two children, and my brother's wife and their two children, were returning home from a function when the tragedy struck. Only my children are alive now," Raj Kumar, father of Arushi and Shaurya, said.

Deputy Chief Minister Mukesh Agnihotri said a magisterial inquiry has been ordered into the incident."

President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union ministers Amit Shah and J P Nadda and Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge condoled the loss of lives in the incident. Modi announced an ex gratia of Rs 2 lakh to the next of kin of each deceased, while the injured would get Rs 50,000. *—PTI*

People walk past the damaged remains of a bus lying in debris after a massive landslide in Bilaspur district of Himachal Pradesh on Wednesday **PHOTO: PTI**

HEAVY RAINS ON SATURATED HILLS LED TO DARJEELING TRAGEDY: GSI

KOLKATA, 8 OCT

The Geological Survey of India (GSI) said it had issued a high-risk landslide warning for Darjeeling on 4 October, hours before intense rainfall triggered devastating slides. GSI deputy director general Saibal Ghosh stated the orange alert was released for several blocks, based on heavy rain forecasts and saturated soil conditions. He explained that October rainfall is particularly dangerous in the Himalayas after a long monsoon. Ghosh warned that human encroachment on unstable slopes worsens the region's vulnerability. *—PTI*

MORE STATES BAN

5 MP kids who took Coldrif syrup critical

CHHINDWARA, 8 OCT

Five children from Madhya Pradesh are in a critical condition while 20 have died due to kidney infections caused by the consumption of a "contaminated" cough syrup, state Health Rajendra Shukla said on Wednesday.

A police team from Chhindwara has gone to Kancheepuram in Tamil Nadu to arrest the owner of the company that manufactures Coldrif cough syrup, Shukla said after meeting families of the three children, who died due to suspected kidney failure, linked to the consumption of the "toxic" Coldrif cough syrup.

Five children are undergoing treatment in Nagpur in Maharashtra.

Amid the investigations, the MP government had suspended two drug inspectors and a deputy director of the Food and Drug Administration, and also transferred the state's drug controller.

Praveen Soni, a doctor from Chhindwara was arrested on charges of negligence.

A special investigation team of the Madhya Pradesh police are probing the deaths and registered a case against the manufacturer.

The Andaman and Nicobar administration issued an advisory to stop Coldrif for children below two years old.

All stakeholders were asked to review and ensure compliance with the advisory, regarding the rational use of cough syrups in the paediatric population.The Telangana Drugs Control Administration also issued a 'Public Alert - Stop Use Notice' against two cough syrups. *—PTI*

Madhya Pradesh Health Minister Rajendra Shukla said that a police team has gone to Tamil Nadu to arrest the drug's manufacturer **PHOTO:PTI**

Assam DSP held in Zubeen's death

GUWAHATI, 8 OCT

Zubeen Garg's cousin and Assam police DSP Sandipan Garg was arrested on Wednesday in connection with the singer's death in Singapore last month.

The DSP was booked under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

Earlier, North East India Festival chief organiser Shyamkanu Mahanta, the singer's manager Siddharth Sharma, and his two band members - Shekhar Jyoti Goswami and Amrit Prabha Mahanta - were apprehended and are in police custody.

Sandipan, who had been present with Zubeen during the alleged drowning incident. was interrogated several times in the last few days.

Meanwhile, the police suspended Nandeswar Bora and Prabin Baishya, two personal security officers (PSOs), of singer Zubeen Garg after detecting financial transactions worth over Rs 1.1 crore in their bank accounts.

While one PSO's account shows Rs 70 lakh, Rs 45 lakh was detected in the other's account.

- The police suspended Nandeswar Bora and Prabin Baishya, two personal security officers of Garg after detecting transactions of over Rs 1.1 crore in their bank accounts.

The police will issue fresh summonses to 10 people associated with Assam Association Singapore in connection with Garg's death as they failed to appear before the investigating agency within the deadline.

Of the 11 NRIs from the state who were issued notices, only Rupkamal Kalita recorded his statement before the police in Guwahati. *—PTI*

SC bins rape case against TN director

NEW DELHI, 8 OCT

The Supreme Court on Wednesday quashed a rape case against Tamil film director and politician Seeman lodged by an actor in 2011 after both parties agreed to put a quietus to the matter.

The court noted that the actor has withdrawn her complaint against Seeman.

Seeman also filed an affidavit tendering an unconditional apology and withdrew the allegations made against the actor and undertook not to contact her.

The top court had earlier directed Seeman and the actor to apologise to each other.

The apex court was hearing Seeman's plea challenging a Madras High Court order refusing to quash the case against him.

The high court had directed the police to complete the investigation and file a final report.

Seeman, who leads the Naam Tamilar Katchi party, is facing charges for various offences, including rape. *—PTI*

Rlys blames big bags for Thane accident

MUMBAI, 8 OCT

A Central Railway (CR) probe has concluded that a commuter's 'protruding' backpack caused the fall of eight passengers from two local trains near Mumbra in Thane on 9 June, killing five.

Investigators ruled out technical faults, sabotage, or passenger scuffles after reviewing CCTV footage, eyewitness statements, and public responses. The report said the 30-cm-thick backpack worn by a commuter on the footboard of a Karjat-bound local (S-11) brushed against a passenger hanging on a Kasara-CSMT train (N-10) moving in the opposite direction.

The sudden contact triggered a 'domino effect,' causing passengers from both trains to lose balance and fall. Both trains were running at about 72kmph, within permissible limits, and had adequate clearance, ruling out any track or coach defect.

A fresh mark on coach 5341A of the N-10 confirmed external impact from a backpack, officials said. *—PTI*

6 killed in Andhra cracker unit blast

RAYAVARAM, 8 OCT

Six persons died and two injured in a fire accident at a crackers manufacturing unit in Dr BR Ambedkar Konaseema district in Andhra Pradesh on Wednesday, said a police official.

Police suspect that the accident could have occurred due to mishandling at the crackers manufacturing unit.

Dr BR Ambedkar Konaseema district superintendent of police Rahul Meena said the crackers manufacturing unit was a licensed one.

"Yes, six bodies have been found. We are verifying the details of the bodies. I think it was a licensed unit only," Meena.

Further, he said the injured persons were shifted to a hospital.

Andhra Pradesh CM N Chandrababu Naidu expressed his condolences and directed senior officials to visit the incident site and participate in the relief efforts. They were asked to ensure medical treatment for the injured. *—PTI*

Fire engulfing the crackers manufacturing unit in Dr BR Ambedkar Konaseema district in Andhra Pradesh **PHOTO: SCREENGRAB**

REPUTATION AT STAKE

Wankhede vs Aryan: Red Chillies, Netflix summoned by Delhi HC

NEW DELHI, 8 OCT

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday issued notice to actor Shahrukh Khan, Red Chillies Entertainment and Netflix on a defamation suit filed by IRS officer Sameer Wankhede for allegedly maligning his reputation in their series "The Ba***ds of Bollywood".

Justice Purushaindra Kumar Kaurav issued summons to defendants -- Gauri Khan owned Red Chillies Entertainment Private Limited, Netflix, X Corp (formerly Twitter), Google LLC, Meta Platforms, RPSG Lifestyle Media Private Limited and John Doe -- on the defamation suit.

The court also asked them to file their replies within a duration of seven days.

The court listed the matter for further hearing on 30 October.

The court, which did not pass any interim injunction order at this stage, asked the defendants to also file their replies on Wankhede's application seeking to take down the alleged defamatory content from several websites.

Wankhede sought Rs 2 crore in damages which he wants to be donated to the Tata Memorial Cancer Hospital for cancer patients.

"This series disseminates a misleading and negative portrayal of anti-drug enforcement agencies, thereby eroding public confidence in law enforcement institutions," the plea submitted.

The plea said the series has been deliberately conceptualised and executed with the intent to malign Wankhede's reputation in a colourable and prejudicial manner, especially when the case involving the officer and Shahrukh Khan's son Aryan khan is pending and sub-judice before the Bombay High Court and the Narcotic Drugs and Psycho tropic Sub stances Special Court in Mumbai at the time. *—PTI*

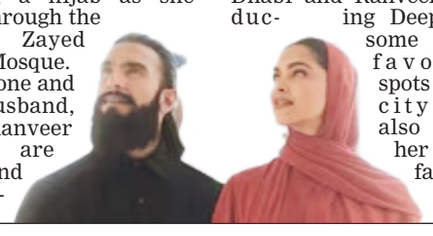
Deepika in hot waters for wearing hijab in ad

NEW DELHI, 8 OCT

Bollywood star Deepika Padukone is back at the centre of a social media storm with a tourism campaign for Abu Dhabi in which she is seen wearing wearing a hijab as she walks through the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque.

Padukone and her husband, actor Ranveer Kapoor are the brand ambassador for Experience Abu Dhabi, the destination brand of the Department of Culture and Tourism-Abu Dhabi.

The campaign video titled "Mera Sukoon" shows the couple exploring Abu Dhabi and Ranveer introducing Deepika to some of his favourite spots in the city.Some also called her fake a faminist. *—PTI*



HC asks Shilpa to deposit Rs 60 cr before foreign trips

MUMBAI, 8 OCT

Bombay High Court on Wednesday said it would consider the plea filed by actor Shilpa Shetty and her husband, Raj Kundra to travel abroad only if they deposit Rs 60 crore, the amount involved in a cheating case against them.

A case was registered against Shetty and Kundra for allegedly duping businessman, Deepak Kothari of nearly Rs 60 crore in a loan-cum-investment deal.

The couple had filed a petition in HC seeking suspension of the look out circular issued against them, so that they can travel for their professional commitments and leisure trips abroad, which were denied. *—PTI*

Sukumaran, Salmaan raided in luxury cars smuggling case

KOCHI, 8 OCT

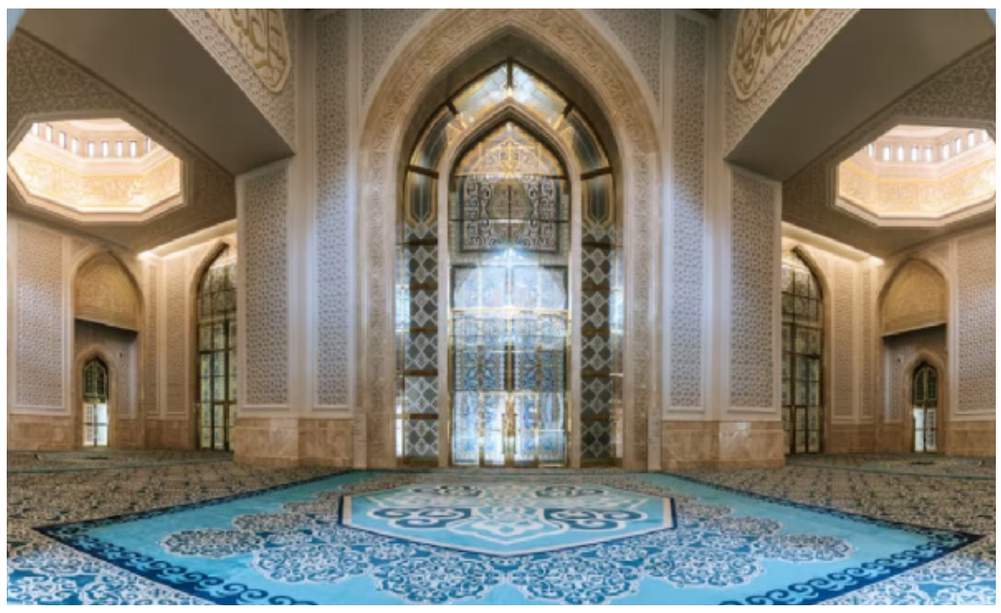
The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday raided premises linked to actors Prithviraj Sukumaran, Dulquer Salmaan and Amit Chakkalackal and some others across Kerala and in Tamil Nadu as part of an investigation linked to a recent Customs case related to alleged smuggling of luxury vehicles from Bhutan to India.

The searches also covered certain vehicle owners, auto workshops, and traders in Ernakulam, Thrissur, Kozhikode, Malappuram, Kottayam and Coimbatore.

The action is being taken under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) in a recent case unearthed by the Customs Preventive department related to alleged smuggling of luxury vehicles and unauthorised foreign exchange transactions though hawala channels.

Preliminary findings point to a Coimbatore-based network that used "forged" documents and fraudulent RTO registrations in Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and some other states to import high-end cars through the India-Bhutan and India-Nepal routes *—PTI*

WORLD'S LARGEST RUG



India's carpet town, Bhadohi, has entered the Guinness Book of World Records for crafting the world's largest handmade rug, which now adorns the biggest mosque in Central Asia -- the Grand Mosque in Astana. The carpet measures 12,464.29 square feet. The hand-tufted carpet was meticulously crafted in Bhadohi, renowned for its rich tradition in carpet weaving. Over 1,000 skilled artisans contributed to its creation, a process that spanned more than six months. The installation took 50 days to complete. The carpet is valued at Rs 12 crore

PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

India's taboo topic: Sexual violence against boys

The sexual abuse of male children is a taboo topic that is rarely discussed in India. DW looks at the silent struggle male survivors face.

In India's southern state of Kerala, a 16-year-old boy said he was sexually assaulted for over two years by 14 men he met through a dating app designed for the LGBTQ+ community.

Police have reportedly opened investigations into 14 men and made at least nine arrests.

Though the case has highlighted sexual violence faced by boys in a country that often comes under international focus for attacks on women, experts and survivors say the topic remains a taboo that is rarely acknowledged or discussed in India.

A national study by India's Women and Child Development Ministry in 2007 found that more than half of boys had suffered sexual abuse, with just under a quarter experiencing a severe form of sexual abuse ***PHOTO: PTI***

SHAME, SILENCE, STIGMA

DW spoke with one male survivor of sexual abuse, a 24-year-old man who preferred to remain anonymous.

He shared his story of how he was "exploited" as a young boy by his relatives, people he "trusted, looked up to and thought were protectors."

The man said the silence around the abuse he suffered was largely shaped by the overwhelming pressure of societal expectations that men should be strong — and silent.

"Society's idea of masculinity says that, if you speak up, you lose your manhood," he said.

Sociologist Vijaylakshmi Brara told DW that the reluctance to accept men as victims stemmed from traditionally rooted notions of masculinity, in which men are seen as dominant — not as victims.

"The traditional notion of 'manliness' casts men as strong and superior, making it difficult to accept that men can also be vulnerable or subjected to abuse," Brara said.

In mainstream thinking, she said, male victimhood is often dismissed, with patriarchal societies unable or unwilling to accept or even imagine that men and boys could be victims to such crimes.

"Society is deeply ingrained with the belief that only women are victims, leaving male experiences largely invisible," Brara said.

This experience is one shared by the survivor DW spoke with.

"No one imagines a boy could be abused," he said. "When a boy (makes allegations of sexual abuse), he's often laughed at."

A national study by India's Women and Child Development Ministry in 2007 found that more than half of boys had suffered sexual abuse, with just under a quarter experiencing a severe form of sexual abuse.

Though the study's use of a convenience sample rather than a representative one means the statistics should be viewed with caution, it nevertheless illustrates that the issue is widespread.

MALE SURVIVORS OVERLOOKED

Nandini Bhattacharya, who advocates for men who have survived such violence, told DW that male sexual assault survivors face unique psychological challenges — including deep shame and isolation fueled by a general disbelief in their accounts.

Survivors have to overcome a culture of victim-blaming that is tied to traditional gender norms, in which men are expected to be providers and protectors, while women are seen as weak and fragile, she explains. "There is an increased feeling of guilt, self-blame and anxiety alongside difficulty expressing emotions and intimacy and often results in silence and reluctance to seek help or report the abuse," Bhattacharya said.

This culture of silence also means that boys are often overlooked in discussions about abuse, feminist writer Yashodhara Ray Chaudhuri said. "Contrary to common beliefs, boys suffer abuse at rates comparable to girls, with some cases involving female abusers also," she said.

Chaudhuri said many men only revealed such experiences years later in private, highlighting the critical need to confront social taboos and broaden understanding of the abuse beyond prescribed gender frameworks.

PROTECTING CHILDREN REGARDLESS OF GENDER

Chaudhuri said there was a need for more and stronger gender-neutral laws such as the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act that are designed to protect children from sexual abuse — regardless of gender. "Any form of harm or physical abuse on any human body must be equally reprehensible regardless of situations or gender," he said. *—DW News*

SALAR ساڈا بنگلور

UK's once-mighty Tory is now battling extinction

Britain's Conservatives used to boast they were the world's most successful political party. Not anymore.

The centre-right party that governed the UK for more than 60 of the last 100 years before being ousted in 2024 is embracing Donald Trump-style policies, including mass deportations and DOGE-style spending cuts, as it battles to remain a contender for power.

The Tories are fighting not just the Labour government to their left, but Reform UK to the right. Nigel Farage's hard-right party has topped opinion polls for months, trounced the Conservatives in May's local elections and has welcomed a stream of defecting Tory members and officials.

"Yes, we have a mountain to climb," Conservative leader Kemi Badenoch told party members at their annual conference, which ends Wednesday in Manchester. "But we have a song in our hearts, and we are up for the fight."

Under Rishi Sunak the government staggered on until the July 2024 election that delivered the Conservatives' worst-ever defeat

PHOTO: WIKI COMMONS

A SHRUNKEN PARTY

Crowds were thin under the vast vaulted roof of the Manchester Central conference venue, a former railway station in the northwest England city, as delegates absorbed the party's diminished stature.

"It's not in a great place at the moment, we're aware of that," said Neil McCarthy, a member from northern England. "There needs to be passion, and we need to get the message across that we've changed."

The Conservatives have undergone years of turmoil – some of it of their own making, some of it shared by incumbent parties in a world of economic and geopolitical instability.

The economic benefits of Britain's 2020 exit from the European Union, championed by those now running of the party, have been elusive. Prime Minister Boris Johnson won a huge election victory in 2019 but was ousted by the party in 2022 after a string of ethics scandals.

His successor, Liz Truss, sent inflation and interest rates soaring with a disastrous tax-cutting plan that wrecked the Conservatives' reputation for economic stability.

Under Rishi Sunak, the government staggered on until the July 2024 election that delivered the Conservatives' worst-ever defeat.

Badenoch, a small-state, low-tax advocate elected leader last year, has shifted the party to the right, announcing policies with a distinct MAGA flavour.

She says a Conservative government will scrap carbon emissions reduction targets and deport 150,000 unauthorised immigrants a year with a removals force similar to Immigration and Customs Enforcement in the US as well as sharply reducing legal immigration. It would also leave the European Convention on Human Rights and limit the power of judges to block the will of government.

Such policies alarm civil liberties groups. They are also similar to what Farage says he would do in power, leading some to ask what sets the Conservatives apart from Reform.

Climate-change targets, human rights rules and support for managed immigration were until recently mainstream Conservative positions, and some Conservatives are uncomfortable with the party's rightward turn.

LEADERSHIP DOUBTS

The government does not have to call an election until 2029, but Badenoch's poor poll ratings and lackluster performance in Parliament have stirred speculation that she may be ousted long before then.

Prime Minister Keir Starmer faces similar discontent within his Labour Party as Reform destabilises parties of both left and right.

Conservative lawmaker Robert Jenrick, who lost the 2024 leadership contest to Badenoch, has spent the ensuing months building his online brand — one popular social media video showed him confronting subway fare-dodgers — and becoming one of the party's loudest anti-immigration voices.

Video published online by The Guardian newspaper showed him remarking that he "didn't see another white face" in a neighbourhood in Birmingham. Jenrick said he was not being racist but expressing concern about "ghettoised communities" and lack of integration.

Jenrick drew large crowds at his conference appearances, where he said the Conservative Party needs to show more "hunger," while insisting he is loyal to Badenoch.

"The party made its choice," he said. "Kemi is our leader."

Jenrick hasn't ruled out running for leader again, or making a unite-the-right electoral pact with Reform, an idea Badenoch rejects.

MEMORIES OF MARGARET THATCHER

Facing an uncertain future, many Conservatives are retreating to their happy place: the 1980s, when Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher transformed Britain with her free-market policies.

The Manchester conference hall sported life-size cardboard Thatcher cutouts, tables stacked with biographies of the late leader and bottles of Thatcher whisky for 85 pounds ($114) each. Delegates could dance to 1980s hits at a "retro disco-themed club night celebrating Margaret Thatcher."

David Davis, a Conservative lawmaker since 1987, said Badenoch could still revive the party as Thatcher once did.

"In the late 70s she was being talked down, too, for precisely the same reasons: a bit too tough, a bit too hard-edged, a bit too dangerous, the policies," Davis said.

"But then we had the (financial) crisis and suddenly Thatcher was the right answer. We're going to have another crisis, and Badenoch will be the right answer too." *—PTI*

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

Death, devastation fill Myanmar as children starve amid US aid cut

Across Myanmar and in the refugee camps along its borders, the suffering unleashed by the United States' gutting of its foreign aid program has been severe and deadly, particularly for children, The Associated Press found.

In interviews with 21 Myanmar refugees, five people trapped in internment camps inside Myanmar and 40 aid workers, medics and researchers, the AP uncovered widespread devastation due to President Donald Trump's dismantling of the US Agency for International Development.

Children are screaming for food, safehouses that sheltered dissidents have shuttered and people must forage for hours in the jungle each day to survive.

Here are the key takeaways from AP's investigation, as told through the people who have been impacted:

THE FUNDING CUTS HAVE BEEN FATAL

Mohammed Taher clutched the lifeless body of his 2-year-old son and wept. Ever since his family's food rations stopped arriving at their internment camp in Myanmar in April, the father had watched helplessly as his once-vibrant baby boy weakened, suffering from diarrhea and begging for food.

On 21 May, exactly two weeks after Taher's little boy died, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio sat before Congress and declared: "No one has died" because of his government's decision to gut its foreign aid program. Rubio also insisted: "No children are dying on my watch."

That, Taher says, "is a lie."

"I lost my son because of the funding cuts," he says. "And it is not only me — many more children in other camps have also died helplessly from hunger, malnutrition and no medical treatment."

A statement from the State Department that did not address most of AP's questions said the US "continues to stand with the people of Burma," using another name for Myanmar.

Taher is one of 145,000 people forced to live inside squalid, prison-like camps in the state of Rakhine by the ruling military. Most, like Taher, are members of Myanmar's persecuted Rohingya minority, which was attacked by the military in 2017 in what the US declared a genocide.

Kneecapped by the funding cuts, the UN's World Food Programme in April severed assistance to 1 million people across Myanmar, including to Taher's family.

Kneecapped by the funding cuts, the UN's World Food Programme in April severed assistance to 1 million people across Myanmar ***PHOTO: PTI***

After their food rations evaporated, Taher's family meals shrank from three a day to one.

Taher's son, Mohammed Hashim, faded. The clever, caring toddler, who loved playing football and whose cheerful chirps of "Mama" and "Baba" once filled their shelter, could barely move. Anguished by his son's sobs, Taher tried to find help.

On 7 May, Taher and his wife watched their baby take his final breath. Their other children began to scream.

Asked who is to blame for the loss of his son, Taher is direct: the US.

CHILDREN HAVE PAID THE STEEPEST PRICE

Twelve-year-old Mohama squats in the mud, rain battering his rail-thin frame. He plucks worms from the dirt and places them in a ratty plastic cup.

The worms are bait for the fish he hopes to catch for his family. Recently, he says, there hasn't been enough to eat. So, despite the deluge, he grabs his bamboo fishing pole and wades through rushing water as high as his chest.

Many of Myanmar's children have survived the horrors of war only to now find themselves hungry and hurting because of a political decision they don't understand.

Mohama escaped to Thailand with his parents, older brother and two little sisters in 2023 after soldiers attacked their village. He remembers huddling in a bomb shelter, and running alongside hordes of others fleeing for their lives.

Mohama's parents returned to Myanmar to find work, and his sisters eventually joined them. He lives now with his grandparents and teenage brother in a one-bedroom shelter.

After two hours, Mohama holds up his haul: around 10 tiny fish, each less than 3 cm long. It's enough for a few mouthfuls.

Still, this is lucky. Some days, he says, he catches half as much.

FORAGING FOR SURVIVAL

The grandfather slides a knife into the sodden jungle floor, pries loose a bamboo shoot and places it into a tattered tote bag slung across his bony back. His stomach is empty, his breath ragged and his energy exhausted. But if he stops now, his family could starve.

Mahmud Karmar has been foraging in the jungle along the Thailand-Myanmar border for two hours and has barely collected enough to feed his wife, six children and 6-year-old grandson two meals. He presses his parched lips into the river and guzzles.

"I am hungry," Karmar says, panting. "So I drink the water to get myself full."

For years, a grant by the US State Department provided food and medicine to Karmar and the other Myanmar refugees living in the Thai border camps.

But the ending of that grant on 31 July forced the region's main aid group, The Border Consortium, to terminate food assistance for 85 per cent of camp residents.

That has left many like Karmar dependent on the jungle's quickly-dwindling resources to survive.

Karmar didn't just lose his food rations because of the aid cuts -- he lost his job with the International Rescue Committee, which the State Department had, until 31 July, funded to run health clinics in the camps.

The 55-year-old sits in the dirt and wipes sweat from his brow. A few days earlier, he says, he fainted while attempting to work in a cornfield in a bid to earn 120 baht — enough to buy one day's worth of rice for his family. *—PTI*

Hundreds of hikers rescued from Mt Everest

BEIJING, 8 OCT

About 900 hikers, guides, and staff stranded by a weekend snowstorm on the Chinese side of Mount Everest have reached safety, state media reported late Tuesday. The storm struck Saturday night, cutting off access to tents at over 4,900 metres. In all, 580 hikers and more than 300 guides, yak herders and other workers were stranded. About 350 hikers descended by noon Monday, with the remainder arriving Tuesday. Some reportedly suffered hypothermia and were assisted with food, medicine, heating, and oxygen. The scenic area is temporarily closed.

In neighbouring Nepal, a South Korean climber died in a weekend storm near Mera Peak, a 6,476-metre Himalayan mountain south of Everest. *—PTI*

Indian-origin brothers jailed for child abuse in UK

LONDON, 8 OCT

Vruj Patel, 26, was sentenced to 22 years in an east London court on Tuesday for child rape offences, while his brother Kishan Patel received 15 months for possessing indecent images of children. Detective Sergeant Rob Blant of the Metropolitan Police described Vruj Patel as a cowardly, opportunistic offender who preyed on vulnerable victims. Vruj's crimes date back to 2018 and include rape and sexual assault of minors, as well as voyeurism. The Met Police urged other potential victims to come forward under 'Operation Castline.' Both men will face lifelong sexual harm prevention orders and, in Vruj's case, lifelong registration on the U.K. sex offenders' register. *— Agencies*

3 die as rains lead to floods in Northern Vietnam

HANOI, 8 OCT

Torrential rains in the aftermath of Typhoon Matmo triggered widespread flooding in northern Vietnam, killing at least three people and damaging thousands of homes. The typhoon, despite not hitting Vietnam directly, brought heavy rains Tuesday that left rivers swollen, flooded streets, submerged houses and caused numerous landslides in the region that had already battled four other typhoons and tropical storms since September. According to Vietnamese state media, more than 4,800 homes were damaged as of Tuesday. Authorities said three people were killed due to landslides in the provinces of Cao Bang and Thanh Hoa, and four others were missing after being swept away by flood in Thai Nguyen and Thanh Hoa.*—PTI*

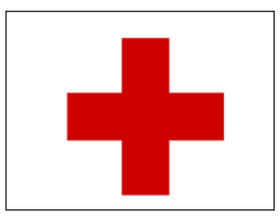


PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Medicine shortage hits 80% of East Congo Hospitals

DAKAR, 8 OCT

Over 200 health facilities in eastern Congo are experiencing shortages of medicines as a result of fighting in the region and a lack of humanitarian funding, the International Committee of the Red Cross said Wednesday.

The Red Cross said it assessed 240 health centres and clinics in North and South Kivu, two provinces where the Rwanda-backed M23 rebels made an unprecedented advance earlier this year, further deepening one of the world's largest humanitarian crises.

"The lives of thousands of people are at stake," François Moreillon, the head of the ICRC's delegation in Congo, said during a news conference on Wednesday. "Currently, more than 80 per cent of health facilities in the Kivu provinces receive no support from any of its humanitarian partners." aid workers on the ground. *—PTI*

Hamas, Israel enter 3rd day of peace talks with US

Hamas hands over list of Palestinian prisoners for exchange

CAIRO, 8 OCT

Israel and Hamas entered a third day of peace talks at an Egyptian resort Wednesday, with more senior officials from the US, Israel and mediating countries expected to join, a sign that negotiators aim to tackle the toughest issues of an American plan to end the war in Gaza.

Hamas is seeking firm guarantees from US President Donald Trump and mediators that Israel will not resume military operations in Gaza after the group releases all remaining hostages, a move experts say will be challenging.

The group also submitted a list of Palestinian prisoners it wants released in exchange for the hostages.

Key aspects of the peace plan remain unresolved, including Hamas disarmament, the timing and scope of an Israeli troop withdrawal, and the establishment of an international body to govern Gaza after Hamas steps down.

Qatar's Prime Minister and top diplomat, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, traveled to Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, to join the talks, alongside US mediators including President Trump's Middle East envoy, Steve Witkoff, and his son-in-law Jared Kushner. From Israel, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's adviser Ron Dermer was also expected, an Israeli official said.

Preliminary talks took place on Wednesday morning between Qatari, Egyptian, and US mediators and representatives from both sides.

Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi said in televised remarks that the negotiations so far "were very encouraging," signaling cautious optimism amid the complex discussions over hostages, prisoner exchanges, and broader security arrangements. *—PTI with agencies*

8 Palestinians were killed in Israeli attacks in Gaza on Wednesday

Smoke billows over Gaza Strip following an Israeli bombardment, as seen from southern Israel 2025 **PHOTO: PTI**

ICC accused me of complicity in genocide: Giorgia Meloni

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni said she has been accused of "complicity in genocide" in a complaint lodged with the International Criminal Court (ICC) over Rome's support for Israel, according to state television company RAI. Defence Minister Guido Crosetto and Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani have also been denounced, she said. The complaint, signed by some 50 people, including lawyers and experts had said, "By supporting the Israeli government, particularly through the supply of lethal weapons, the Italian government has become complicit in the ongoing genocide".

Israel intercepts another flotilla heading to Gaza

The Israeli military intercepted a nine-boat flotilla early Wednesday in the Mediterranean Sea trying to break Israel's naval blockade of Gaza and detained scores of activists on board, the flotilla organisers and the Israeli Foreign Ministry said. The ministry said the 145 activists, who were in good health, were being brought to shore in Israel for processing and are expected to be deported soon. This comes shortly after Israel had intercepted the Global Sumud Flotilla, which contained prominent activists such as Greta Thunberg.

Carney praises Trump after he calls Canada '51st state'

WASHINGTON, 8 OCT

- Prime Minister Mark Carney, in his second visit to the Oval Office, attempted to woo Trump, as the two discussed trade, Gaza and mutual deals.

US President Donald Trump again joked about making Canada the "51st state" as he met Prime Minister Mark Carney in the White House. However, Carney, in his second visit to the Oval Office, attempted to woo Trump, as the two discussed trade, Gaza and mutual deals.

Trump said that he was open to extending the free trade agreement with Mexico and Canada through a renegotiation or seeking "different deals".

The United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement is due for review next year, as the durable and amicable alliance between Washington and Ottawa has been fractured by Trump's trade war and annexation threats.

The free trade agreement was enacted during Trump's first term, and it allows the majority of Canadian and Mexican goods to be shipped to the US without tariffs. But Trump has made it clear since returning to office that he wants to reshape the relationship. This could severely impact Canada, as more than three-quarters of its exports go to the US.

"We could renegotiate it, and that would be good, or we can just do different deals," Trump said. "We're allowed to do different deals if we want. We might make deals that are better for the individual countries."

Trump showed a fondness for Carney — something he didn't have toward Carney's predecessor, Justin Trudeau — but noted there was a "natural conflict" between the two countries.

Yet, Carney heaped praise on Trump.

"You are a transformative President. Since then, transformation in the economy, unprecedented commitment to the NATO partners to defence spending. Peace from India, Pakistan, Azerbaijan and Armenia. Disabling Iran as a force of terror," Carney said. He laughed along as Trump repeated his "51st state" jab. *—Agencies*

President Donald Trump greets Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney at the White House on Tuesday, in Washington **PHOTO: PTI**

30, including Lt Colonel, killed in clashes in Pak

PESHAWAR, 8 OCT

At least 11 military personnel, including a Lt Colonel and a Major, were killed during an intelligence-based operation in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, bordering Afghanistan, the army said on Wednesday.

In a statement, The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said 19 terrorists of the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), designated as "Fitna al-Khawarij," by Pakistan government, were also killed in the operation in Orakzai district on the intervening night of 7-8 October.

The term refers to a historical group known for violence.

During the "intense" exchange of fire, Lt Col Junaid Tariq, 39, led from the front.

His second-in-command, Major Tayyab Rahat, 33, were among the soldiers killed, along with nine others killed in the incident.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed grief over the death of the soldiers.

The ISPR statement further said the operation targeted militants reportedly present in the area. It also aimed to eliminate threats to the security forces. *—PTI*

HOPES ON BUDGET, CHANCE OF SNAP ELECTION LESS LIKELY: FRANCE'S PM

PARIS, 8 OCT

France's outgoing caretaker Prime Minister Sebastien Lecornu downplayed the likelihood of a parliamentary dissolution and suggested there was "willingness" to pass the contentious budget.

"There is a willingness to have a budget for France before 31 December," Lecornu told media Tuesday after meeting Conservatives and Centre-Right parties, ahead of talks with the Socialist Party. "This willingness creates momentum, which reduces the prospects of dissolution."

President Emmanuel Macron had faced calls for a snap election after Lecornu, his fifth PM in two years, resigned Monday, a day after taking office. Like his predecessors, Lecornu struggled to pass a budget to curb the deficit and manage public debt.

National Guards arrive in Chicago

ELWOOD, 8 OCT

National Guard troops from Texas were positioned outside Chicago on Wednesday and they could be in Memphis by Friday as the Trump administration pushes ahead with an aggressive policy toward big-city crime.

President Donald Trump has called Chicago a "hell hole" of crime, although police statistics show significant drops in most crimes, including homicides. National Guard members from Republican Texas settled at an Army Reserve centre in Illinois on Wednesday.

Democratic Illinois Gov JB Pritzker called it an "invasion." He has accused Trump of using troops as "political props" and "pawns," and said he didn't get a heads-up from Washington about their deployment.

Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson signed an executive order Monday barring federal immigration agents and others from using city-owned property as staging areas for enforcement operations.

Since starting his second term, Trump has sent or talked about sending troops to 10 cities, including Baltimore; the District of Columbia; New Orleans; and the California cities of Oakland, San Francisco and Los Angeles. In Oregon, a judge over the weekend blocked the Guard's deployment to Portland. *—PTI*

Military personnel arrive at the US Army Reserve Centre, in Elwood, Chicago **PHOTO: PTI**

Bondi clashes with Senate over Epstein

United States Attorney General Pam Bondi faced fierce questioning at a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing, as Democrats accused her of politicising the Department of Justice (DOJ) and grilled her over her handling of the Jeffery Epstein sex trafficking case. Bondi launched a series of personal attacks, saying some Senators ought to thank the President for their entire career as she refused to answer questions into "ongoing investigations". The questioning comes two weeks after, her justice department indicted former FBI Director James Comey, triggering an outcry from Democrats.

US govt SHUTDOWN continues...

WASHINGTON, 8 OCT

Tours at the US Capitol have stalled as the government shutdown entered its second week with no resolution in sight. President Donald Trump has threatened mass federal worker firings and withholding back pay.

"You have to negotiate," said Sen. Bernie Sanders, Independent of Vermont, late Tuesday on the Senate floor. "That's the way it works." However, no public negotiations are currently underway.

Republicans, holding a congressional majority, believe they have the political upper hand, resisting Democratic demands to fund health insurance subsidies quickly. Democrats, in turn, argue they are protecting Americans from rising health care costs and place blame on Trump for the impasse.

A loosely formed bipartisan group of senators has discussed measures to address health insurance concerns, but no plan has emerged. With both sides entrenched, the shutdown continues to affect federal operations. *—PTI*

3RD US STATE

Deepavali now official holiday in California

NEW YORK, 8 OCT

California designated Deepavali as an official state holiday, becoming the third state in the US to officially recognise the Indian festival of lights as a holiday.

California Governor Gavin Newsom Tuesday announced that he has signed a bill titled 'AB 268' by Assembly member Ash Kalra designating Deepavali as a state holiday.

In September the bill had successfully passed both houses of the legislature in California and was awaiting final action by Newsom.

"California is home to the largest population of Indian Americans, and designating Deepavali as an official state holiday will uplift its message to the hundreds of thousands of Californians that celebrate and help introduce it to many throughout our diverse state," Kalra had said last month. "Deepavali brings communities together with the message of goodwill, peace, and shared sense of renewal. California should embrace Diwali and its diversity, not keep it hidden in darkness."

Community leaders welcomed the announcement **PHOTO: FREEPIK**

Nearly one million Indian-origin live in California. In October 2024, Pennsylvania became the first state to officially recognise Deepavali as a state holiday, followed by Connecticut this year. In New York City, Deepavali has been declared a holiday for public schools.

Community leaders and leading diaspora organisations welcomed the announcement, calling it as a "landmark legislation" for Indian-Americans.

Prominent Silicon Valley entrepreneur and former advisor to Joe Biden, Ajay Bhutoria, said the announcement is a "radiant milestone" in California's journey toward true inclusivity and cultural celebration. *—PTI*

Russian strike damages Ukrainian power plant

KYIV, 8 OCT

Russia severely damaged one of Ukraine's thermal power plants in an overnight attack, officials said Wednesday, continuing its campaign to disrupt heat, electricity, and water as winter nears. Two workers were injured, DTEK, Ukraine's largest electricity operator, confirmed.

Ukrainian authorities release limited details on such attacks to protect intelligence, while repair crews work around the clock to restore the grid. The energy sector has remained a key battleground since Russia launched its full-scale invasion over three years ago. Each year, Moscow targets the Ukrainian power grid ahead of winter, aiming to undermine public morale and disrupt military production. Ukraine has accused Russia of weaponising the cold months, which peak in January and February.

In retaliation, Ukraine has conducted long-range strikes on Russian energy infrastructure, recently causing outages in border regions. Ukrainian rockets also killed three people and injured one in Russia's Belgorod region, according to Governor Vyacheslav Gladkov. *—PTI*

Missile launched by Russian army to attack Ukraine **PHOTO: PTI**

Rupee falls by 3P, closes at 88.80 against USD

MUMBAI, 8 OCT

The rupee witnessed range-bound trade on Wednesday and settled for the day lower by three paise at 88.80 (provisional) against the US dollar, tracking a negative trend in domestic equities amid a rise in risk-off sentiments. Forex traders said the US dollar is holding its ground, yet beneath the dollar's steady facade lies a growing tension. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 88.76 against the US dollar, touched an intraday low of 88.81 and finally settled for the day at 88.80 (provisional), registering a loss of 3 paise over its previous close. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading at 98.88, higher by 0.31 per cent. —*PTI*

NephroPlus expand 500 clinics globally

NEW DELHI, 8 OCT

IPO-bound NephroCare Health Services, known for its NephroPlus brand, on Wednesday said it has grown from a single clinic in India in 2010 to 500 clinics across India, Nepal, the Philippines, and Uzbekistan, serving over 33,000 patients annually. Rohit Singh, CEO, said, "Reaching 500 clinics is a proud milestone. This achievement belongs to our guests, partners, and teammates. We aim higher to redefine dialysis care across borders." The company filed draft IPO papers with SEBI in July. As of 31 March, 2025, it had 125 tier-II and 218 tier-III city clinics, generated 1,642 jobs, and trained 132 dialysis technicians. Revenue rose to Rs 755.81 crore in FY25 from Rs 566.16 crore in FY24, with net profit at Rs 67.1 crore. —*PTI*

GST cut benefits passed on to Jawa, Yezdi motorcycles

KOLKATA, 8 OCT

Classic Legends on Wednesday said it has fully passed on the GST rate cut from 28 per cent to 18 per cent to buyers of Jawa and Yezdi motorcycles with engines below 350 cc. The GST reduction took effect on 22 September. Backed by the Mahindra Group, Classic Legends relaunched the iconic brands in India almost four years ago. The company has expanded its sales and service network to over 450 outlets nationwide. A company statement added that the GST benefits aim to boost affordability and sales. Classic Legends plans to strengthen its presence in the premium motorcycle segment while continuing to expand its offerings to cater to young and loyal customers. —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

PhonePe, Paytm avert Rs 200 cr fraud: Co-founder

NEW DELHI, 8 OCT

Payment apps PhonePe and Paytm helped avert potential financial frauds worth Rs 200 crore using the Department of Telecom's Fraud Risk Indicator (FRI) platform, PhonePe co-founder Rahul Chari said on Wednesday at India Mobile Congress. "More than 10 lakh accounts and wallets were frozen, and 48 lakh suspicious transactions blocked," Chari said. PhonePe claims to have saved Rs 125 crore, while Paytm prevented Rs 68 crore in potential losses over the past two months. Chari stressed that onboarding all government and private entities using mobile numbers as financial identifiers would strengthen the FRI platform. He added, "Creating a feedback loop from app signals will help the DoT FRI evolve into a world-class cyber fraud detection system." —*PTI*

1GB wireless data cheaper than cup of tea, says PM

At IMC, govt says it will invest Rs 900 cr in satcom monitoring

NEW DELHI, 8 OCT

PM Narendra Modi addresses the gathering during the inauguration of India Mobile Congress 2025, at Yashobhoomi in New Delhi PHOTO: PTI

1GB of wireless data in India costs less than a cup of tea, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Wednesday as he showcased the country's rapid digital growth to renew his pitch for Make in India across sectors - from mobiles to semiconductors and electronics.

Speaking at the inauguration of the India Mobile Congress (IMC) here, he said India's democratic setup, the government's welcoming approach & ease of doing business policies have helped the country attain an image of an investor-friendly destination.

"Our success in digital public infrastructure is a testament to how committed the government is to a digital-first mindset," he said. "This is the best time to invest, innovate, and make in India."

India has the world's second-largest telecom market, the second-largest 5G market, the manpower, mobility and mindset to lead, he said.

The country recently launched its Made in India 4G Stack. With this, India has joined the list of just five countries in the world that possess this capability, he said.

In terms of user data consumption, we are among the leading countries in the world. "This means that digital connectivity in India is no longer a privilege or a luxury; it is an integral part of Indian life."

Listing tremendous progress made by India in the digital space in the last decade, he said, "1 GB of wireless data in India is cheaper than the cost of one cup of tea."

The government is also financing test beds for technologies like 5G, 6G, advanced optical communications, and tera-hertz to enable product development.

Over the past decade, the mobile phone manufacturing sector has generated millions of direct jobs.

Additionally, the government has earmarked around Rs 900 crore for setting up a National Satcom Monitoring facility to safeguard the country's data resources and spectrum assets, Union Telecom Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said on Wednesday.

During a session on satellite communication at India Mobile Congress, the minister said that the Indian Satcom market, encompassing telecom and broadcasting, was valued at close to USD 4.3 billion last year, and it is expected to triple to around USD 14.8 billion by 2033. —*PTI*

1.38 TIMES SUBSCRIPTION

Tata Capital's 15K cr IPO fully subscribed on closing day

NEW DELHI, 8 OCT

The initial public offering (IPO) of non-banking financial company Tata Capital Ltd got fully subscribed on the final day of bidding on Wednesday.

The company's Rs 15,512 crore share sale received bids for 45,84,78,044 shares against 33,34,36,996 shares on offer, translating into 1.38 times subscription, according to NSE data till 13:36 hours.

Among investor categories, the Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIBs) quota got subscribed 2.07 times, while the portion meant for non-institutional investors received 1.46 times subscription. Tata Capital on Friday collected Rs 4,642 crore from 68 domestic and global institutional investors, with the anchor book witnessing demand nearly five times higher than the allocated amount. The price range for offer is Rs 310-326 per share.

The IPO, comprising a total of 47.58 crore shares, includes a fresh issue of 21 crore equity shares and an Offer For Sale (OFS) of 26.58 crore shares.

Tata Capital is expected to make its stock market debut on 13 October. —*PTI*

Govt urges Tata Trusts to restore stability: Report

The Indian government has intervened to resolve tensions within Tata Trusts, which holds a controlling stake in Tata Sons, the holding company of India's largest conglomerate.

The dispute reportedly involves four trustees-Darius Khambata, Jehangir HC Jehangir, Pramit Jhaveri, and Mehli Mistry—who are said to have acted as a "super board," undermining Chairman Noel Tata's authority.

Home Minister Amit Shah and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman met with Tata Trusts Chairman Noel Tata, Vice-Chairman Venu Srinivasan, Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran, and Trustee Darius Khambata. —*Agencies*

Govt proposes pension for coal workers

NEW DELHI, 8 OCT

The coal ministry is proposing to come out with a new legislation to ensure social security and pensionary benefits to coal workers.

The new law, once approved by Parliament, will replace the 77-year-old Coal Mines Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1948.

The new legislation will take into account important developments in areas such as industrial disputes resolution, working conditions, social security, wage regulation and digitalisation.

The coal ministry has invited comments on the draft Coal Mines Employees' Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Bill, 2025, from the stakeholders.

In the new bill, it is proposed to replace the existing Board of Trustees with the Coal Mines Employees' Provident Fund Board, thereby providing a more robust and accountable regulatory framework.

The Coal Mines Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1948, was enacted to make provisions for framing of a Provident Fund Scheme, a Family Pension Scheme and a Deposit Linked Insurance Scheme for the workers employed in coal mines. The Act is a pre-constitution Act and has been amended several times. The Act is administered by the coal ministry through the Coal Mines Provident Fund Organisation. —*PTI*

Gold hits new lifetime high of Rs 1.26L/10g

NEW DELHI, 8 OCT

PHOTO: PTI

Gold prices rallied for the third straight day and gained Rs 2,600 to hit a fresh lifetime high of Rs 1,26,600 per 10g in the national capital on Wednesday in line with strong global trends amid looming geopolitical uncertainties triggered by the prolonged shutdown of the US government.

Gold has added Rs 6,000 in the past three days as global risk-aversion has prompted investors to rush for safe haven assets.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, gold of 99.9 per cent purity had closed Rs 700 higher at Rs 1,24,000 per 10g on Tuesday, a day after registering a steep surge of Rs 2,700 on Monday.

On Wednesday, gold of 99.5 per cent purity appreciated by Rs 2,600 to touch an all-time high of Rs 1,26,000 per 10g (inclusive of all taxes) in the local bullion market.

It had settled at Rs 1,23,400 per 10g in the previous market session.

Analysts said the ongoing US government shutdown and rising global geopolitical tensions have fuelled the flows into the safe haven asset.

In addition, silver prices surged by Rs 3,000 to trade near its record high at Rs 1,57,000 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes) on Wednesday.

In the overseas markets, bullion prices witnessed robust traction. Spot gold went up nearly 2 per cent to hit a record high of USD 4,049.59 per ounce. —*PTI*

2,434 STOCKS DECLINED

Markets snaps 4-day winning streak

MUMBAI/ NEW DELHI, 8 OCT

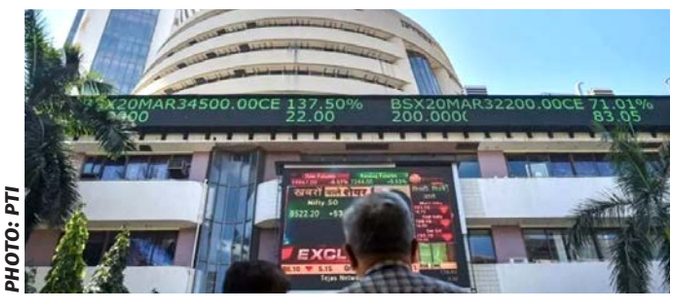


PHOTO: PTI

Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty closed lower on Wednesday, snapping their four-day rally following selling in blue-chip stocks Reliance Industries and HDFC Bank.

In a volatile session, the 30-share BSE Sensex declined 153.09 points or 0.19 per cent to settle at 81,773.66. During the day, it hit a high of 82,257.74 and a low of 81,646.08, gyrating 611.66 points.

The 50-share NSE Nifty dropped 62.15 points or 0.25 per cent to 25,046.15.

Profit-taking in auto, real estate, and banking shares dragged the markets down, analysts said.

Among Sensex firms, Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, Bharat Electronics, UltraTech Cement, Trent, Sun Pharma, Power Grid and Reliance Industries were the major laggards.

However, Titan, Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services, HCL Tech and Tech Mahindra were among the biggest gainers. As many as 2,434 stocks declined while 1,740 advanced and 156 remained unchanged on the BSE.

Additionally, the leading jewellery and watchmaker Titan has reported a 20 per cent growth in standalone revenue in the September quarter of this financial year.

The Tata group-managed firm added a total of 55 stores in the July-September quarter, expanding its combined retail network presence to 3,377 stores across the businesses, according to quarterly updates filed by Titan.

Titan's jewellery division reported a 19 per cent growth in the September quarter in domestic business, mainly helped by "surging gold prices", it said. —*PTI*

SBI to simplify KYC processes, says Chairman

MUMBAI, 8 OCT

- SBI has 2.5 million business correspondents providing 33 services, and its PM Jan Dhan Yojana accounts total 150 million, with 56 per cent operated by women. Speaking at the Global Fintech Fest, Setty highlighted SBI's combination of digital and physical presence.

The State Bank of India (SBI) is working with regulators to simplify KYC and re-KYC processes, Chairman CS Setty said, aiming to improve access and quality of financial services nationwide.

Speaking at the Global Fintech Fest, Setty highlighted SBI's combination of digital and physical presence.

With around 1.6 lakh touchpoints, including contact centres serving rural and semi-urban areas in 15 languages, the bank focuses on inclusive banking.

Technology has sped up onboarding: using e-Aadhaar and the YONO portal, account setup now takes 10–15 minutes, with YONO 2.0 set to support 15 languages and products for farmers, MSMEs, and other customers.

CS Setty PHOTO: PTI

SBI has 2.5 million business correspondents providing 33 services, and its PM Jan Dhan Yojana accounts total 150 million, with 56 per cent operated by women. SMEs can secure loans up to Rs 5 crore in under 30 minutes.

The bank is also ready for acquisition financing and UPI-based lending, including Kisan Credit Card and vendor financing solutions.

Around one-third of SBI's 520 million customers are under 35, highlighting the focus on life-cycle financial management and accessibility across India. —*Agencies*

Roblox sued for lax child protection measures

FRANKFORT, 8 OCT

Kentucky's Attorney General, Russell Coleman, has launched a lawsuit against the online gaming platform Roblox, claiming it has become a "playground for predators" due to inadequate child protection measures. The suit, filed Monday in a state court, calls for stronger age verification, content filters, and parental notifications to safeguard young users.

Coleman was joined by Kentucky mother Courtney Norris, who said she had mistakenly considered Roblox a safe online environment for her children, only to discover it was "the Wild West of the internet, targeted at children." The lawsuit alleges children are exposed to violent or sexual content, and that strangers have contacted them via third-party chat apps.

Roblox defended its safety protocols, highlighting AI moderation, a team of thousands monitoring content, chat filters, and restrictions for under-13 users. The company said it added 100 new safeguards this year, including facial age estimation, and welcomed discussions with Coleman's office.

The Kentucky suit seeks penalties of up to USD 2,000 per violation under the state's Consumer Protection Act, aiming to ensure compliance rather than shut the platform down. —*PTI*

EFFECTIVE FROM 31 DEC

UPI users to get autopay mandate access on all apps

MUMBAI, 8 OCT

The National Payment Corporation of India (NCPI) has introduced an upgraded system, which enables users to access and track all the active UPI mandates through any UPI app of their choice, said sources.

According to sources, the new upgrade will also allow users to port their mandates from one UPI app to another.

The framework will be effective from 31 December, 2025, it said. Additionally, the framework will allow porting and carrying out UPI autopay mandates for merchants via Payee PSP of their choice, sources said.

According to NCPI's circular issued on 7 October, the members who use UPI autopay have been directed to adopt the updated framework by 31 December, 2025.

In simple terms the new directive will help users to identify their regular payments made through UPI on any app. For example, users with active mandates on multiple apps like Google Pay and PhonePe will now be able to see all of them on any UPI app, helping them organize their financial planning more efficiently.

NPCI has instructed payer PSP banks and UPI apps to ensure complete lifecycle management of users' UPI autopay mandates. It also stated that portablility will strictly be user-driven only, which can be accessed throigh 'View mandate' option.

Separately, NPCI has also announced additional authentication methods for UPI, said sources.

The additional authentication methods include face authentication for PIN set/reset and on-device biometric authentication for UPI transactions. The biometric option will be available for transactions up to ₹5,000, with the limit subject to review in the future, the circular said. —*Agencies*

Tesla unveils 2 cheaper EV versions to boost sales

NEW YORK, 8 OCT

Tesla launched cheaper versions of its Model Y and Model 3 on Tuesday to revive faltering sales, but investors sold off shares nonetheless.

The new Model Y is priced just under $40,000 with a stripped-down interior, while the Model 3 costs under $37,000, dropping below $35,000 in New York with state rebates. The move comes amid a challenging year for Tesla, facing an ageing line-up, strong competition from foreign EV makers, and boycotts targeting Elon Musk.

"Investors were looking for something truly different, not an iteration of an old product," said Edmunds analyst Ivan Drury, as Tesla shares fell 4.5 per cent to USD 443.09, after a previous-day 5 per cent rise.

The new Model Y features a shorter 321-mile range, fewer speakers, a fabric interior, no panoramic roof, and no second-row touch screen. The Model 3 also reduces range and amenities. Both compete in the $40,000 EV market, while buyers may delay purchases following the expiry of the $7,500 federal EV tax credit. —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Ranji Trophy: Abhimanyu Easwaran to lead

KOLKATA, 8 OCT

Consistent top-order batter Abhimanyu Easwaran will lead a strong Bengal side in the upcoming Ranji Trophy 2025-26 season beginning on October 15, the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) announced on Wednesday. Talented wicketkeeper-batter Abishek Porel has been named vice-captain. At the same time, the pace department will receive a major boost with the inclusion of India's fast bowling duo of Mohammed Shami and Akash Deep. Veterans Anustup Majumdar and Sudip Chatterjee, along with promising youngster Sudip Kumar Gharami, will form the backbone of the batting unit. The squad also features emerging names such as Rahul Prasad, Saurabh Kumar Singh, and Vishal Bhati.—*PTI*

Kerala Blasters signs Portuguese forward Tiago

SHANGHAI, 30 OCT

Kerala Blasters FC on Wednesday announced the signing of Portuguese attacker Tiago Alexandre Mendes Alves, ahead of the upcoming season. The 29-year-old arrives from Japan's J1 League, where he played for Tokyo Verdy. While primarily a left winger, Alves can also play as a center-forward and attacking midfielder, which will give Kerala Blasters tactical flexibility in the final third. Alves began his footballing education in Portugal's esteemed youth systems, progressing through clubs such as Sporting CP, Académica Coimbra, and Os Belenenses before making his senior breakthrough with Varzim SC.—*PTI*

WATC golf: Dahiya best placed Indian tied at 28th

SINGAPORE, 8 OCT

Rakshit Dahiya carded an even-par 72 in testing conditions to finish as the best-placed Indian at tied 28th in the opening round of the World Amateur Team Championship (WATC) for the Eisenhower Trophy here on Wednesday. The Delhi NCR Cup 2025 winner was seven strokes behind leader Hiroshi Hirahara Tai of Singapore at the Tanah Merah Country Club. Team India ended the opening day in tied 18th position among 36 nations in the overall standings. Part of the three-member team sent by the Indian Golf Union (IGU), Dahiya didn't have a desired start to his WATC campaign, with bogeys on the second and fifth holes. But he made amends by having birdies on the 12th, 16th, and 17th holes.—*PTI*

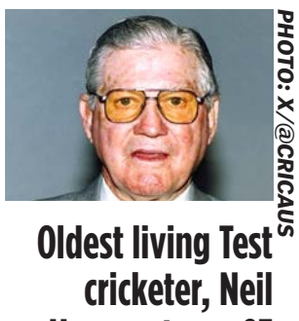


PHOTO: X/@CRICAUS

Oldest living Test cricketer, Neil Harvey, turns 97

SYDNEY, 8 OCT

Former Australian batter Neil Harvey, the oldest living Test cricketer, turned 97 years old on Wednesday. Harvey, the longest living cricketer for Australia, is also the last living member of Don Bradman's famed Invincibles touring Australian side that remained unbeaten in England over 34 matches in 1948. The Victoria-born left-handed batter played 79 Tests between 1948 and 1963, scoring 6,149 runs at an impressive average of 48.41. In 306 First-Class appearances, Harvey scored more than 21,000 runs while averaging in excess of 50. One of Harvey's most remarkable achievements includes his prolific form during a Test series against South Africa in 1952-53—*PTI*

Decline in Windies Test cricket is 'cancer': Sammy

West Indies coach Daren Sammy addresses a press conference ahead of the second and final Test on Wednesday PHOTO: PTI

NEW DELHI, 8 OCT

Former captain Darren Sammy didn't mince words when he compared the decline of Test cricket in the West Indies to "cancer" in the system developing over a long period of time said on Wednesday.

The two-time T20 World Cup-winning captain feels that role models in the shortest format are readily available for Gen-Next due to performances, and they can only play with the resources that are available to them. Asked what ails West Indies cricket when it comes to Tests and how it affects him as a person, the eloquent Sammy put forth his perspective in hard-hitting words.

"I mean, last time we won a Test series in 1983, my mother had me," he said in jest about 42 years of not winning a red ball series in India.

And then he was dead serious. "I know now I'm under the microscope. I'm in the middle, and we're open to criticism, to be criticized by everybody. But the root of the problem didn't start two years ago. It's something that started way back," Sammy, who also captained in a lopsided 2013 series, said.

"It's like a cancer that's already in the system. If you don't get cancer, you know what happens. And again, it's breast cancer month.

So, it's a good way to put it. That our problems don't lie on the surface. It's rooted deep into our system," said Sammy.

West Indies lost the first Test by an innings and 140 runs, and it was the lack of fight that had disappointed fans of the regional outfit.

Brian Lara, on Tuesday, spoke about players not exactly keen on playing the long form.

"We could only work with what we have and who's willing. The inability to match some of the franchises across the world has been an issue," Sammy was honest.

"But what I always tell these guys, if we complain about not having the best facilities, not having enough manpower like the other teams, not having the best technology, all these things that the other teams are superior to us, it's no secret."—*PTI*

Ind vs WI 2nd Test: Good batting strip on cards

The pitches would only offer a turn from Day Three

NEW DELHI, 8 OCT

A good batting surface is in store for the second and final Test between India and the West Indies at the Feroz Shah Kotla, with curators expecting the pitch to aid strokeplay for the first two days before offering only slow turn as the game progresses. Match starts on 10 of October.

The traditionally black-soil surface at the Kotla has a reputation for assisting batters early on before gradually breaking down to bring spinners into play.

For this Test, however, a fresh center strip has been prepared, and the early part of the contest is expected to be dominated by batters."The center strip has been prepared for the Test. This is a different track from the one on which Smriti Mandhana scored a 50-ball hundred," a BCCI source told PTI on condition of anonymity. According to the official, the curators have deliberately focused on ensuring even bounce and true carry in the initial stages."If West Indies bat better, then the match won't end inside three days. The pitches would only offer turn from Day Three, and that too slowish in nature," the source added.

Shubman Gill, center, and vice captain Jadeja, right, inspect the pitch during a practice session ahead of the second and final Test cricket match of the series between India and West Indies on Wednesday, PHOTO: PTI

The pitch preparation is being supervised by local curator Ankit Datta, with senior BCCI curators Taposh Chatterjee and Ashish Bhowmick overseeing the final touches.

Historically, the Kotla has been known for its slow turners, where spinners gradually come into play as the game wears on.

But for this Test, indications are that batters could enjoy a relatively smooth ride at least until the afternoon session of the third day.India lead the two-match series 1-0 after winning the opening Test in Ahmedabad by an innings and 140 runs. —*PTI*

Roston Chase PHOTO: PTI

WOMEN'S WC 2025

India eyes hefty contribution from top-order batters

VISAKHAPATNAM, 8 OCT

India vs South Africa
Match starts at
3.00 pm IST

India's top-order batters will have to shed their diffident ways against a rejuvenated South Africa to instill more momentum into their slow-brewing ICC Women's World Cup campaign here on Thursday.

A glance at the points table will show India's comfortable second position; the hosts can slip to third if Australia beats Pakistan on Wednesday in Colombo, with two wins from as many games. But beneath that glossy exterior, India has a mounting worry in the lack of runs so far from talismanic Smriti Mandhana, skipper Harmanpreet Kaur, and the energetic Jemimah Rodrigues.

The troika faltered against Sri Lanka and Pakistan, forcing India to rely on the second line in Harleen Deol, Amanjot Kaur, Richa Ghosh, and Deepti Sharma for the rescue act. India were 124 for six against Lanka and 159 for five against Pakistan, and each of those situations could have been more perilous if the late order batters were not able to gut it out in the middle.

A repetition of the script will be disastrous against a more well-equipped side like South Africa, and India needs a heftier contribution from their star triumvirate in this game.

If the result does not go in India's favor, it will not only endanger their position on the points table but will push them into a tighter corner against champions Australia on 12 October. Of course, the Indian management will see the positive side in the outings so far, winning without a major hand from its star batters, and might perceive it as the presence of multiple match-winners. But deep down, they will also accept the need for runs from Mandhana, Harmanpreet, and Rodrigues that can be the difference between a good total and a winning total against top sides like South Africa or Australia. —*PTI*

World Junior C'ships: India storm into quarters with clinical win over UAE

GUWAHATI, 8 OCT

PHOTO: PTI

India stormed into the quarterfinals of the team event at the BWF World Junior Badminton Championships for the Suhandinata Cup with a clinical win over the UAE here on Wednesday.

In other ties, the USA upset France while Japan got the better of top seeds Thailand to top their respective groups at the National Center of Excellence here.

While India defeated UAE 45-37 45-34, Japan got the better of Thailand 45-42 45-34 in Group A, and USA made it to the last eight stage with a 45-43 45-43 win over France in Group B.

The top teams in all eight groups will compete in the quarterfinals for the coveted trophy, while the others will fight in the classification rounds. Other teams to top their respective groups include China (Group D) and Indonesia (Group F). India, seeded second, had beaten Nepal and Sri Lanka in their earlier Group H clashes and went into the final round as the only unbeaten team in the group. —*PTI*

YOUTH TEST SERIES

India U-19 beats Australia U-19

SYDNEY, 8 OCT

PHOTO: PTI

India Under-19s defeated their Australian counterparts in the second Youth Test to sweep the two-match series 2-0 at the Great Barrier Reef Arena in Mackay on Wednesday.

It took India less than 13 overs to chase the 81-run target with seven wickets in hand. Vedant Trivedi, who top-scored with an unbeaten 33, finished the game with a boundary.

Captain Ayush Mhatre (13) and Vihan Malhotra (21), and Rahul Kumar (13 not out) contributed to the chase while Vaibhav Suryavanshi got a golden duck.

The visiting side had earlier bundled out the host for 116 after taking a 36-run lead in the first innings. Naman Pushpak and Henil Patel picked three wickets each. For the Australia U-19s, wicketkeeper Alex Lee Young top scored with 38.

It was a successful outing for India U-19s down under, winning all five matches on tour, including three ODIs and the two Tests.

Trivedi was the top run getter for the visitors in both formats, scoring 173 runs in ODIs and 198 runs in the red-ball games. Suryavanshi was the second highest with 133 runs in Tests and the third best in one-day 124 runs. —*PTI*

De Minaur, Rinderknech reach quarterfinals

SHANGHAI, 8 OCT

Australia's Alex de Minaur cruised through to the Shanghai Masters quarterfinals on Wednesday, ousting Portugal's Nuno Borges 7-5, 6-2.

De Minaur is chasing his second title of the year and is, after Novak Djokovic, the highest-ranked player left standing after a string of high-profile exits. The first set heated up when the world number seven needed five break points in the 11th game against Borges, converting the last with a backhand for a decisive advantage. De Minaur carried the momentum into the second set, breaking in the first and third games. "The first set was a very tight set, we both were kind of trying to figure each other out," said the 26-year-old De Minaur. —*PTI*

INDIA TOUR: BAVUMA WON'T BE SURPRISED WITH SPIN-FRIENDLY PITCHES

MUMBAI, 8 OCT

South Africa captain Temba Bavuma is expecting India to dish out turning tracks for the two-Test series next month despite the home team's inclination towards playing on balanced tracks under captain Shubman Gill.

Temba Bavuma PHOTO: PTI

India has relied on their spin strength on rank turners to gain points in WTC cycles in the past, but Gill has said he wants his side to play on tracks that offer equal opportunities to batters and bowlers. WTC defending champions South Africa will play India in two Tests scheduled in Kolkata (November 14-18) and Guwahati (November 22-26).

"In terms of the surfaces in India, they are spinner-friendly. We won't be in shock if we get to India and we're playing on spinner-friendly wickets," Bavuma told the media during the CEAT Cricket Rating Awards.

"Generally, teams now are always using their conditions to their advantage, especially with the World Test Championship cycle and the way that it's been set up, so we won't be surprised from that point of view," he said.

Bavuma, who led South Africa to the title win in the 2023-25 WTC cycle, said it will depend on how visiting spinners bowl in India compared to the home team's spinners.

"From my experience, there always seems to be a difference between the way Indian spinners bowl in their own conditions versus spinners outside of India. "There's always that challenge of foreign spinners adjusting to the conditions. They're either bowling quicker in these conditions (or) bowling flatter," he said. —*PTI*

SOUTH AFRICA WILL PLAY INDIA IN TWO TESTS

- Kolkata (14-18 November)
- Guwahati (22-26 November)

ASIAN CUP QUALIFIERS

India faces Singapore amid a messy build-up

SINGAPORE, 8 OCT

PHOTO: PTI

The build-up was marred by several players missing the first half of the national camp.

The Indian football team faces a tricky Singapore in a crucial AFC Asian Cup qualifying third round match here on Thursday.

Though the talisman Sunil Chhetri has returned to the team after he was rested for the CAFA Nations Cup in August-September, Khalid Jamil's side has trained together for barely a week for such an important match.

India is at the bottom of four-team Group C after having garnered a single point from their first two matches against Bangladesh (0-0) and Hong Kong (0-1). Singapore, on the other hand, is currently at the top of the group with four points from its two games.

Any slip-up on Thursday could jeopardize India's chances of making it to the main tournament in 2027, for which only the group winners will make the cut.

Jamil had named 30 players for the national camp in Bengaluru, which began on September 2,0, but 14 of them, including Chhetri, were not released by the clubs.

Later, most of the players joined the camp towards the end of September, meaning they were with the team for barely a week before their departure on Monday.

A helpless Jamil, who had just two defenders attending the camp in the first half, had urged the All India Football Federation (AIFF) and clubs to find a solution to the age-old impasse.Match starts: 5 pm IST. —*PTI*

Salvai scores twice as Juventus beats Benfica

TURIN, 8 OCT

Juventus defender Cecilia Salvai marked the 10th anniversary of her debut in the Women's Champions League with her first two goals in the competition as her team came from behind to beat Benfica 2-1 on Tuesday in the first match of the new-look tournament.

Salvai scored the winner four minutes from time to add to her first-half goal, which canceled out Lucia Alves' early opener.

Cecilia Salvai PHOTO: PTI

Defending champion Arsenal was playing record eight-time winner Lyon later, with runner-up Barcelona hosting Bayern Munich. Paris FC was playing OH Leuven.

After the men switched from a group phase to a league-based format last season, the women's tournament made the move, too. Alves scored the first goal of the revamped competition in the sixth minute, finishing off Nycole Raysla's cross with an emphatic close-range strike.

However, Juventus took control of the match from that point, driven by a lively performance from Barbara Bonansea down the right. —*PTI*